THE
COMMONWEAL

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CARBOYS IN CARLOADS

LABOR DAY deliverances by three recognized authorities from three widely separated platforms may appear at first reading to have no common message. However, a closer study of the appeal of William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, to a gathering of church workers in Boston, and of the statement of Matthew Woll, vice-president of the same organization, who denounced in New York the attempt of foreign agitators to control organized labor in the United States, will show that each was of singular significance in its application to the address of the Secretary of Labor, who spoke at Montauk Point on the problems of mass production.

The surprising feature of this speech by a Cabinet officer was its refreshing frankness. It was scarcely to be expected that a member of the President's official family would choose labor's great holiday to call attention to conditions which have resulted in "considerable unemployment" in this country. Yet that is exactly what Mr. Davis did, and he deserves the thanks of all thinking Americans for his candid presentation of certain aspects of the mechanical development of industry which compel careful consideration.

"We Americans are justly proud of our marvelous mechanical and industrial progress," said the Secretary. "In the last six years, in particular, our march ahead in the lavish use of power has been tremendous. But the question remains: What is all this machinery doing for us? Above all, what is it doing to us? Take, for example, the revolution in the glass industry. A single machine—not a single manufacturing plant, but a single machine—can turn out all the carboys, five-gallon glass containers, that the United States can use. Not long ago, hundreds of skilled men were needed to blow those carboys. They got good wages, they maintained families and they were good consumers. Now a single machine has released the majority of these men to other pursuits. While we should continue to think of our wonderful machines, we must also think of our wonderful American workers. If we do not, we may have discontent on our hands. This amazing industrial organization we have built up in our country must not be allowed to get in its own way."

It is interesting to note that these remarks were made just one year after the publication of an article on mass production prepared by Henry Ford for a new edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, in which it was asserted that "criticism of mass production as a means of reducing employment has long since been out of court."

There is one feature of this speech of the Secretary

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of Labor which is perhaps typical of the discussion of the problem presented and of kindred economic problems, by Americans who profess to have studied them: it envisages mass production in America as a matter directly and solely affecting in its results the people of this country. The effect on other countries of unbridled mechanical production does not seem to have been taken into consideration. Yet it must be obvious that the policy of encouraging enormous output by mass production in this country not only creates problems here but complicates these problems by repercussions from abroad which are inevitable.

One American who takes a broad view of the whole matter is Mr. Edward A. Filene, a leading retail merchant of Boston. After spending several months abroad studying business and social conditions, Mr. Filene gave to the New York Times some conclusions which are worthy of careful cogitation.

"Hard times and political radicalism may come in the United States," he said, "unless Europe becomes more prosperous and able to buy more of our products. We are producing here far more goods than our population can consume. As mass production increases, it will oversupply our home markets and cause super-competition among ourselves. This will mean the end of our prosperity, for it will destroy profits, reduce wages and create unemployment. . . . Europe appears worse off than it was a year ago." And then this corollary, which was not suggested in the speech of the Secretary of Labor at Montauk: "One thing to be borne in mind is that scientific mass production requires less and less tariff protection."

There is more than this to be borne in mind by the American manufacturer who has made mass production his business god. Other countries have tariff barriers and may increase protection at the very time his own government has been compelled by mass production to reduce its assistance. One of America's best customers, France, did that very thing only yesterday in making its commercial treaty with Germany.

Nevertheless, it is from Europe that the most sensible method of modifying, if not correcting, the evils of unrestricted mass production has come. A year ago, the big manufacturers of Germany could see no other way to meet what they regarded as the menace of American methods than to copy them. The great German steel trust reported proudly what had been done by a concern in a country not having the vast natural resources or the large home market of the United States, in combining plants and utilizing mass-production methods. A few weeks ago, at the annual convention of the National Association of German Industry, the delegates decided that they would not attempt to compete with the United States in quantity production but would concentrate on the development of quality products.

Here would seem to be the solution of the problem disclosed by Secretary Davis when he expressed the hope that the machines which had created wealth would not be the agencies for creating poverty. Here also is a task to which the Federation of Labor may apply itself if it fears the encroachments of the "red" element in its councils as unemployment becomes more general. Here is opportunity for those church workers who were urged by Mr. Green to improve manhood as well as merchandise.

Mass production is not under all circumstances an unmixed evil. The great danger that attaches to it is that so many persons have come to regard it as an unmixed good for the whole community. Sometimes it may produce poverty of pocket; too often it produces poverty of mind and of spirit. Man does not live by bread alone, but when he does and that bread is taken from him, a condition is created in the life of the nation which is fraught with much more danger than any temporary trade depression of the days before mass production was general.

The consumer as well as the worker is pleading for quality production to march side by side with quantity production in the United States. He has the purchasing power but he grudges the full exercise of it when his money can buy not what he wants but only what the distributors of the mass production manufacturer have decided he shall have. There is a potential market for quality goods in this country which wholesalers and retailers have not fully appreciated. There is a need for the ideals of quality manufacture here which is the need of a nation.

Few of those who pin their faith in American development to the extension of mass-production methods give proper consideration to the effect of their utterances on the mind of the farmer. The agricultural problem is sufficiently acute in itself, when the homogeneity of the nation is sought; but the widening gulf between the urban and rural denizens of the United States is still further extended when workers in various trades who may be sufferers from the mass-production system fail to find sympathy from the laborers on the farm because they are regarded as of the family of those who are receiving altogether disproportionate assistance from a government which is deaf to the pleadings of the farmer. There is opportunity now for a better understanding, if the policy of mass production is modified and ideals of quality are substituted in some instances for boasts of quantity. If the days of the lean kine approach because mass production has proceeded at too rapid a pace, it should not be possible for any to say in the future, as some have said in the past, that the days of labor depression are to be hailed with satisfaction as days of prosperity for those on the farm.

Secretary Davis expresses confidence that unemployment will not increase, that wise employers will invent ways of utilizing the men displaced by machines. But these ways must not be makeshifts; they must be the ways of those who recognize that labor shorn of all dignity is not a contribution of ultimate value to themselves or to the country at large.

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WEEK BY WEEK

THOUGH no American is likely to yearn for the introduction of Mussolini's methods into this country, it seems that all of us ought to concede frankly the value of at least some of those methods to Italy. There is no good reason for doing otherwise, and there is always at least an excuse for being fair. When the New York World, in a recent editorial, quoted approvingly the opinion of Mr. Julius Barnes, who used to be president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, to the effect that Fascismo has accomplished nothing which democracy has not done better in this country, it obviously glossed over a most important difference. Mussolini is not governing a nation accustomed to representative institutions and possessed of great per capita wealth, but trying to rule a people that had gone beyond the verge of self-government in company with a very inefficient democracy. He was obliged to save the vestiges of industry from collapse; to stabilize an almost bankrupt financial system; to unify a people still very heterogeneous; and to inaugurate something like a decent program of social reform. All of us may well find the methods adopted by Fascismo drastic and, in the nature of things, temporary. The fact remains, however—and one must respect facts—that these methods accomplished a great deal after a régime of corrupted democracy had accomplished nothing.

ANOTHER aspect of the same World editorial is also inconsistent with reality. "The gigantic structure of Italian Fascism," we are told, "is the creature of Big Business, which financed its beginnings." This statement is precisely as true as these declarations would be: Big Business financed the beginnings of the United States republic, the establishment of the Austrian republic, and the continued existence of French democracy. What really matters, after all, is whether the Mussolini government is operating in the spirit of Big Business. We find that the first decision of the Special Tribunal for Labor, instituted as a substitute for the strike and lock-out, bears a very democratic and humane complexion. The Tribunal considered a difference between the National Confederation for Agriculture and the Confederation of Agricultural Laborers regarding the wages of women workers in the rice fields. It authorized a reduction of sixty centimes in the daily wage—one-half of what the laborers had previously consented to accept, on the ground that greater reduction was not justified in view of either the cost of living or the profits of industry. If the Tribunal continues to operate in this spirit, it can be said to have arbitrary powers but it cannot be accused, it seems to us, of having an arbitrary mind.

SOME time ago The Commonweal presented an authoritative outline of the purposes of the Catholic Union of International Study, the headquarters of which are at Fribourg, from which influence radiates through various channels to Geneva and the League of Nations. It is now evident that the work accomplished has meant a great deal in the solution of such problems as the supplying of information gathered by Catholic missionaries regarding the slave-traffic in Africa; the status of Catholic missions in mandated territory; the treatment of religious minorities in Irak; the control of the opium and drug trade; and the extirpation of the white-slave industry. As a general rule, the character of the assistance given by the Union is summed up in Baron Jean de Montenach's phrase, "the politics of being present." Few of the members have any official status, but they live in Geneva and other cities of international political importance as representative Catholic individuals, and courteously supply information when they are called upon to give it. Many of them feel that there is great need for association with American Catholics; and they request that tourists going to Geneva communicate with some of the Union's representatives there, the most accessible of whom is probably the Reverend P. A. Arnou, S.J., stationed in the International Labor Office. We are also informed that Mr. M. F. Doyle, a Philadelphia attorney with offices in the Land Title building, is interested in the work and will be glad to supply information to those who care to receive it.

IN THE opinion of many who attended, much good was accomplished by the Lausanne conference. Men who had grown unaccustomed to realizing that there exist other points of view than their own met in assemblies and outside, listened to earnest discussions of fundamental human problems, and caught something

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of that enthusiasm for a spiritual community which had stirred those who originally promoted the meeting. It would be easy to call attention to a number of high lights, such as the declaration of Dr. Peter Ainslie that he would willingly see his own denomination die if a larger Christian unity might live. Yet precisely this willingness is so really the cause of unity and so generally wanting, that one must feel, however sanguine one's view of mankind, that the goal is still far from being achieved—that, indeed, it may never be achieved. Years ago people used to hope for the return of a large section of the Anglican Church to Rome. Today there are many who, while not agreeing with Mr. Belloc that the Englishman has made of his church a patriotic institution from which departure is treason, nevertheless feel that conversion will continue to remain entirely a matter of the individual. And if that be true in the case of a body which has so many reasons of a historical and moral character for considering reunion, which in the past has taken part in many very serious conferences with representatives of Catholicism, how can we expect the disparate units of the Protestant world to coalesce? If the forbearance called for by Christian charity can be made possible, more will have been accomplished than even the hopeful can legitimately expect.

THE Bishop of Ripon, suggesting to assembled British scientists that the exploits of crucible and microscope be postponed for ten years in order that mankind may "catch up," was probably not so ridiculous as many have assumed. It is, of course, quite impossible to halt scientific investigation. People will keep on prying into the secrets of the natural universe, they will proceed with the job of harnessing newly discovered energies to some kind of job. But there might well be some attempt on the part of mankind generally to pause and consider whether it ought to go as far as the scientist is urging it to go. For nearly a hundred years all of us—that is, the aggregate of civilized peoples—have been careening down an inclined plane toward mechanistic industrialism with a speed so rapid that there has been no time to think. Is this the right direction? Are we physically, mentally and morally able to endure the strain? Few would now answer such questions as optimistically as does Herr Dessuaer, spokesman for one section of the German Centre party, who sees in scientifically created industrialism a "new human dimension" in which unparalleled freedom and opportunity exist. And precisely because there are so few, the Bishop of Ripon may have, quite unconsciously, voiced the convictions of all those others who have the right to be considered as comprising the significant majority.

SCHOOL has opened once more, so that millions of youngsters have been turned over for a number of months to their teachers. It is a highly important fact which ought never to be thought of merely as part of a routine, and seldom as primarily a method. The busy teacher, however, is often scarcely able to think at all, and must rely upon someone with more leisure and complete familiarity with her problems to devise better ways in which her work can be done. From the point of view of Catholic education, two such ways of special significance were explained before the recent convention of the National Catholic Educational Association, and have been widely talked of ever since. The Reverend Henry Borgmann presented a plan for the teaching of Christian doctrine which bore the rather curious title of "Libica," the word being formed by combining the first two letters in "liturgy," "Bible" and "catechism." In other words, the author drew attention to the method used during patristic and mediaeval times, according to which the Church year formed the nucleus of educational advancement, with the Scriptures and the catechism following hand in hand with it. Father Borgmann's presentation is most interesting, and will no doubt be read with profit by many teachers. The second matter is more theoretical in character, being concerned with the broader philosophic principles upon which the religious teacher bases his or her work. Every teacher needs to reflect now and then upon these principles, in order that the day's toil may bear a seal of good fortune. We have seldom seen the whole matter presented so ably and succinctly as it was in an address given by the Reverend Charles Raschab, professor in the Dominican College at San Rafael, California. Copies may be obtained from the secretary of the Association.

THAT the presidential address of Sir Arthur Keith at the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science will precipitate considerable controversy in scientific circles is a foregone conclusion. The confident assertion that the great body of leading physiologists and biologists are united in agreement that man has been raised from a place among anthropoid apes will not be allowed to go unchallenged. Too many distinguished names of those who reject this theory come readily to mind. But while discussion may wax warm among experts on this issue, there are two aspects of the presidential address on which there can be no dispute. One is its clarity; whether the average layman agrees or disagrees with Sir Arthur's findings, he must confess that the argument has been offered clearly and in a manner that permits him to grasp every one of the points advanced. But the second aspect of the address gives even more cause for satisfaction; its whole tone and temper is so unlike many of the pronouncements of scientists of lesser note that it might serve as a model for those who appear to think that acrimony and rancor combined with a sense of vast superiority over ordinary mortals must be exhibited whenever they undertake a discussion of the Darwinian theory.

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THAT perennial wanderlust which seizes upon all of us during some time or season, even appearing disconcertingly in those children who run away from home and seek for a rainbow via the subway or the train, is no doubt a permanent characteristic of the spiritual life. The reason why all the "reasonable religions" of the eighteenth century have died and why those of the present make no headway, is undoubtedly the fact that they close the door to necessary and improving exploration. The point has been made so well by the Reverend John Cavanaugh, C.S.C., in a recent sermon, that one takes pleasure in musing over his words: "The Church herself does not know the ultimate meaning of the mysteries; if she did, she would explain them. In this respect she is like a little child sent by her mother on a difficult errand to a grocery store. The child may not fully understand the terms of the message, but she keeps repeating it to herself as she hurries along the way. So the Church sacredly preserves a correct form of words when speaking of religious truths, but these words cannot explain, for example, the Mystery of the Incarnation. The correct form of words only conveys the spiritual fact behind them, only defines the terms of the mystery."

IT IS with a certain glorious gusto that the city of Antwerp has observed the three hundred and fiftieth centenary of the birth of Rubens. There were Masses and Te Deums, pageants and cantatas, orations and cheering, proving that the master of "glory and triumph" is as fortunate in his immorality as he was in life. No evil seems to have touched him, no bitter discouragement is anywhere visible as a veil flung before his vision. The reason was obviously the singular good fortune that was his in the fact that no conflict existed between his inner self and the society he served. A Catholic artist living today may well envy this most Catholic of artists for the fact that the Church had room for all of him—for the glowing majesty of his canvases, for his glad acceptance of life, for the way in which he said his prayers. The Madonna with the Angels, the other great Antwerp canvases, bear not the slightest trace of compulsion toward the puritanical, the fearful, the meanly servile. He derived from no Jansenists, but from the Jesuits —great men in whose hearts there was an even mightier surge of heroism than rose in Rubens's own breast; men who, resolving that the Church was again to be as large as the world, did not try to compress all of life into one room, into one stern syllogism. We may well remember Rubens, and with him the whole of that spiritual fellowship which, during nearly two centuries, held the devils of despair and oppression from the citadel of European men.

SEASONAL just now is the county fair, America's one notable rural community enterprise. The whole country (and incidentally a good percentage of the more indigenous city population) was brought up to know the horse races, the blue-ribboned cattle and hogs, the vast displays of pumpkins, needlework and canned fruit which used to be assembled for inspection. It may be that the fair never had any great effect upon the development of agriculture or even upon the domestic arts, though it no doubt encouraged a spirit of friendly rivalry among housewives and husbandmen. But we all used to get a composite view of the industry of the farm, seeing in yellow corn and fat beeves symbols of the harvest yielded annually by productive land. And as we walked through beribboned display halls, or sat huddled together on fences to catch a glimpse of local trotting talent out to break what then seemed a fairly awesome record, faces became a little more familiar and the neighbors seemed to live close at hand. Of course there were always, too, any number of fakers—men who did neat tricks by sleight-of-hand, women whom chance had given the power to read the human palm and predict all kinds of misfortunes and blessings. In short, the fair was a homespun, neighborhood institution, as simple as a Hawthorne sketch of country manners and as close to the soil as the roots of a tree.

THE county fair of today is a different thing. To begin with, one can now reach the grounds in a few minutes via automobile, and the long caravans of sweating horses drawing families to town are no longer seen. Displays are still in evidence, but a shrewd student of the situation knows that their constituents are brought in by earnest seekers after premimums who fetch their produce from one fair to another. A few men still look at the cows and the sheep, but even the farmer's daughter has grown too accustomed to silk and patent leather to venture nearer mother nature than is absolutely necessary. The great "stunts" of the present are aerial ascensions, automobile shows and what are termed "attractions." Third-rate vaudeville players, lacking bookings on the regular circuits, find the county fair cycle relatively attractive pickings. For three days or so, acrobats and clowns, Hawaiian bands and jubilee singers, bring to the country a variety of entertainment which smacks smartly of the big town. And, though one may regret the circumstance, the fair crowd, grown sophisticated and conscious of boredom, lingers while the show is on and then goes its separate ways—with the aid of gasoline and balloon tires.

BROTHER ANDRÉ, who accepts the petitions of thousands of pilgrims each year at the shrine of Saint Joseph at Côte des Neiges, on the slope of Mount Royal, just outside Montreal, recently celebrated his eighty-second birthday. Those Americans who are blessed by the friendship of this humble, rosy-cheeked member of the Holy Cross order will find it difficult to realize that the guardian of a shrine he has made world-famous has passed so many of life's milestones.

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But in making others happy, Brother André has found peace and happiness for himself and, with them, the secret of perpetual youth. He has had but one worry since he established himself at the shrine: a great admirer, who was a non-Catholic, wrote a book about the good Brother and his work a few years ago, which he entitled The Miracle Man of Montreal. The title stuck, much to Brother André's distress. He objects to being regarded as a miracle-worker. He has but one ambition, to live long enough to see the completion of the oratory to Saint Joseph which is rising on the side of the mountain. As he is only eighty-two and the building is likely to be finished in seven or eight years, this is a longing which seems quite likely to be satisfied.

A NEW peril of the air was reported last week by Captain E. C. Dobbin of the Canadian forest patrol, who narrowly escaped having both of his propeller blades broken by an enormous golden eagle which swooped down on the plane to attack it at a high altitude. Lest the conclusion be too hastily drawn that safety in travel lies only in the use of the family Ford, attention is directed to another news item which appeared in the same issues of the daily papers that enlarged on Captain Dobbin's experience. In Brooklyn, Mrs. Ella Rosenbloom and Miss Agnes Calley were enjoying a pleasant afternoon ride along a well-shaded street when a caterpillar fell on the steering wheel. Both women screamed, the machine proceeded to climb a telephone pole and Miss Calley was picked up with a badly lacerated face. Althogether there may be reason for the increasing popularity of the ballad of gratitude, Thanks For The Buggy Ride.

THE NEGRO IN THE NORTH

MIGRATION northward, from primitive agricultural conditions to complex industrial surroundings, has undoubtedly done something for the negro. It has made individual members of his race wealthy, it has brought education and prominence to others. It has encouraged the development of a new literature and art by the negro, and of a literature which some people, at least, believe is about the negro. It has even, in some measure, contributed to the fostering of religious organization among negroes—organization, one interesting type of which is the association of Catholic negroes which has recently met in convention in New York City. All the while, however, there have been a great many misgivings regarding the negro migration as a whole. These were based sometimes upon serious outbreaks of race feeling, sometimes upon theoretical considerations of what the negro was likely to do under the pressure of a factory-town environment.

Now the same Harlem that has intrigued all shades of Bohemians into dreaming of a semi-tropical city district abloom with every variety of fantastic speech, music and dance—or, more concretely, with "jazz" and "blues"—turns out to be, upon investigation, a fair typical instance of what is happening to the colored race. The report issued by the joint committee on negro child study in New York City comes at the close of seven months of intensive investigation conducted in coöperation with the thirty-odd social agencies busy in the field. Harlem is therein described as "a place where overcrowding, rent exploitation and the lack of non-commercial recreational facilities is breaking up the family life of the negro, where the number of mothers forced to abandon home duties for outside work is four to five times as great among negroes as among the white population, where the proportion of delinquent and neglected children is four to five times as great among the negroes as among the white population of New York City."

When one bears in mind that the total number of negroes in the district is more than 200,000, and is constantly increasing; that the migrations to date are being followed by others and still others; that in 1925 New York City's children's court heard 890 cases in which young negroes were involved; and that, of this number, 61 percent were delinquent boys:—then one sees that a social problem has developed, has grown complex and serious to a point where the ordinary agencies of social welfare have proved totally inadequate. What does the joint committee recommend? Well, its demand is for better and more numerous community facilities. It calls for more attention to the recreational needs of the growing negro boy or girl; for play-grounds, camps and social centres, for more visiting teachers, for schools of greater capacity, with room for delinquents. Certainly no one will deny the value of any of these things. Even the most cursory examination of urban conditions reveals the need there is for them.

But are they sufficient? One feels that, so long as negro migration continues, no system of social relief can keep up with it. Time and money are required to cope with relatively static events and conditions. But when the problem to be dealt with is fluid, when the means to handle it are always necessarily less than they should be, it would seem that little hope for anything like a static solution can be extended. America needs more concerted effort to get at the cause of negro perils. We need to see that, if the negro cannot live in the city, he ought to be provided with a motive for remaining in the country. This motive various agricultural schools are now attempting to supply, but as yet they are too small and too hampered to do more than grasp the fringes of their opportunity.

Meanwhile Harlem continues. It can offer a great deal of hectic excitement—life in feverish night-clubs, whirl-pools of exotic dancing. Anaemic young men with perfectly white skins can seek refuge there from the "monotony" of a surrounding world. The negro, however, is paying a price. Thanks to the work of the joint committee, we are beginning to realize in some faint measure how heavy that price is.

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LIFE THROUGH LITERATURE

VIEWED even from afar, what is termed the "Catholic renaissance in France" is an extraordinarily engrossing and virile literary movement. Taking its rise some years ago in a series of conversions among prominent writers of creative literature, the movement has now passed on to so many diverse branches of writing and thought that it bids fair to rival the "universal Catholicism" of the seventeenth century. One is particularly impressed by the circumstance—unusual, comparatively speaking, in history—that clergy and laymen are working side by side, with a spirit of give-and-take most admirable and encouraging. Of course there has been much to disturb cautious souls. That is inevitable. Huysmans already had established the tradition that a living faith and an artistic temperament could combine into a very personal, even eccentric, literary statement. The heated debate about l'Action Française excited and aroused many; the art of novelists like François Mauriac alarmed many others. But one of the glories of the whole movement is the abundance of intelligent, charitable but outspoken criticism. From time immemorial the French have been excellent critics, but one doubts whether they ever displayed this national characteristic more appealingly or with greater positive effect than at present.

The most important aspect of the "renaissance," however, is the fact that its authors are not the only people interested in it. "There could be no better proof of its success," said Louis Joubert recently, "than the desire of many to exploit it." In other words, Catholic literature is now a salable commodity; and even people who do not agree with what it has to say are eager to buy and sell it. Naturally the opportunity offered needs to be grasped with discretion and vigor. It is, therefore, instructive to note with what alacrity the idea of "series" publication has been taken up. To bring out in succession and under the same general head, a number of books, each of which develops a portion of some general field, demands able editing no less than first-rate collaborators. American readers are aware of several such series, the Pageant of America, issued by the Yale University Press, and the Calvert Series, published by the Macmillan Company being two contemporary instances.

In France the Roseau d'Or series, primarily a collection of varied works by younger Catholic writers, was one of the first to make its appearance. The success of the project has been extraordinary. It promoted such novels as Bernanos's Sous le Soliel de Satan, which The Commonweal noticed at some length and which has been talked of more widely, perhaps, than any other recent European novel; the best of Ghéon's dramas; and, very recently, Jacques Maritain's Primauté du Spirituel. Some idea of how widely these books are read may be formed by bearing in mind the fact that the first editions of the separate volumes are exhausted by subscription immediately upon their publication.

More recently the firm of Bloud et Gay, which for many years has been a hard-working association of strictly Catholic publishers, announced its intention of publishing two series of a somewhat different character; one was to consist of relatively contemporary documents, with a bearing upon literature, philosophy, sociology, public affairs; and the other was to include a series of expositions of problems created by the Christian faith. Still another Catholic firm—Editions Spes, which publishes the excellent review, Les Lettres—has begun the publication of La Nef, a series of brightly written volumes dealing with matters of immediate importance.

Especial attention is directed, however, to the series being sponsored by Bernard Grasset, probably the most enterprising general publisher in Paris. Although Grasset has printed many good books by Catholic writers, the collection bearing the title of La Vie Chretienne is a new departure for him. The purpose of this enterprise is to supply a number of volumes, written by specialists, on the more significant questions raised in the field of religious sciences. Its editors, of whom Maurice Brillant is the moving spirit and the learned Dominican, Père Gillet, the guide and counselor, hope to convey the "orthodox answers" to all these questions in a manner which will combine actuality and critical competence with religious faith. The committee in charge comprises so many names of brilliant young litterateurs that there is every reason to believe that they will demonstrate that solid achievement can be presented in a manner far removed from the "tepidity" against which so many have harangued. Two volumes of the series—to be reviewed in a forthcoming issue of The Commonweal—have now appeared. If they are fair samples of what is to follow, Catholics everywhere and for many generations to come will know the series well. The first volume, borrowing its title, Le scandale de Jesus, from Saint Paul, is a lucid and convincing summary of what history has to say of the Saviour. Its author, the Reverend E. B. Allo, is professor in the University of Fribourg. The second volume is a study of the first centuries of Christianity by J. Lebreton, the famous French authority on that period.

We feel sure that the interest taken by American Catholics in all this good work will grow steadily. Already there are many to whom the French "renaissance" has given profit and pleasure, to whom many of its best books are familiar. Speaking more generally, the movement as a whole is an impressive example of what can be accomplished in the modern world by scholarship of integrity and purposiveness, by the great modern craft of letters, and by the vitality of religious faith expressing itself in good works which, abstract though they may seem in comparison with huge stone structures or teeming conventions, are probably, in their ultimate fruit, more forceful and abiding.

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LEGISLATION AND LIBERTY

By JOHN A. RYAN

ALL laws are social, since they apply to society or to a social group. Usage, however, restricts the term "social legislation" to ordinances for physical, mental or moral welfare, particularly in the case of the poorer and weaker classes. In this paper, I intend to consider two kinds of social legislation which notably diminish human freedom.

Examples of the first kind are: minimum wage and workmen's compensation laws, and statutes providing for compulsory insurance against sickness, unemployment and old age. This kind of social legislation prevents men from oppressing their fellows under the guise of free contract. It enforces justice between two important social classes. Like all other preceptive legislation, it diminishes freedom. Unlike most other social legislation, it restricts the liberty of a small group in the just interest of a much larger group.

The other kind of social legislation to be considered in this paper does not seek to enforce justice between classes, nor to curtail the excessive liberty of one group in favor of another group. It aims to restrain persons in general from actions which are detrimental to themselves. Of this nature are the laws which prohibit public gambling-houses, the traffic in narcotics and the sale and use of alcoholic liquor.

Unfortunately, many social workers, as well as many other groups, neglect this obvious distinction. Regarding both kinds of social legislation merely as beneficial to the economically or morally weak, they overlook the difference between the restrictions upon liberty involved, for example, in a minimum wage law and those involved in a national prohibition law. They do not ask themselves whether the statute produces its beneficial effects by preventing injustice or by diminishing general liberty and general responsibility. They ignore the difference between a law which forbids one man to injure another and a law which forbids men to do something which may harm themselves.

Yet the difference is fundamental. The evils prevented by social legislation of the first kind are inflicted upon men without their consent. Low wages, insecurity of employment, inadequate protection against sickness, accidents and old age, are all unwillingly accepted by their victims. They are caused by other men through the unjust use of economic pressure. On the other hand, the man who loses his money at a public gaming-table, or acquires the cocaine habit, or gets drunk, is himself the voluntary cause of his evil condition. He was not compelled to harm himself through an extortionate contract, nor was he compelled to enter a gambling-house nor to buy cocaine or strong drink. But the laborer is frequently compelled to enter on an unjust employment contract. To be sure, the latter has the alternative of starvation, just as the former has the alternative of denying himself the pleasure of gambling, or drugs or drink; but no reasonable person puts these alternatives on the same level of importance, or holds that the men facing them, respectively, suffer the same injury to their liberty.

We may, indeed, lump together the unregulated labor contract, the gambling-hall, the liquor shop and the traffic in narcotics, calling them all bad social institutions, condemning them equally to suppression by law. This method of classification and evaluation is lacking both in logic and in wisdom. To abolish a social institution which compels a man to choose between insufficient wages and no wages at all, is one thing; to abolish a social institution which merely attracts, induces, lures a man into doing something which may harm him, is a vastly different thing, and the difference must be held fundamental by anyone who fully appreciates the significance of human liberty, responsibility and self-development.

Obviously this difference does not justify the inference that those social institutions which merely attract men to evil, leaving them free to yield or to resist, should never be legally suppressed. Public facilities for gambling, drinking and the purchase of narcotics are not necessary for human welfare. Access to them is not a natural right of the same importance as the right to a living wage or to freedom of movement. Hence these institutions and opportunities may reasonably be abolished for the sake of a larger good.

The "larger good" will have to be definite and of great importance, however, in order to justify interferences with human liberty. Without freedom a person can neither satisfy his present needs nor develop his personality. Adequate freedom supposes the power to abuse freedom.. Responsibility cannot be developed without the opportunity of making mistakes. A person who is prevented by law from abusing his liberty remains essentially a child, a dependent creature, not a self-reliant master of his own fortunes.

The question of legally prohibiting a social institution which injures merely through its attractiveness, is always a question of comparative evil. Would the curtailment of liberty be less harmful to human welfare than the conduct of which the offending institution is the alluring occasion? The cases of public gambling and public traffic in habit-forming drugs seem to demand an affirmative answer. The opportunity to play games of chance in a public resort is of slight benefit to anyone at any time, while the number of persons who gravely abuse it is so great as to make the evil far outweigh the good, whether measured by actual satisfactions or by the promotion of self-control and self-restraint. For legal suppression of the public traffic in narcotics the case is even clearer.

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The drinking of alcoholic beverages presents certain features which are absent from the practices that we have just been considering. The vast majority of those who regularly or occasionally consume these beverages are able to do so without notable harm to themselves or anyone else. At least, this has always been true of peoples who refrained from enacting total prohibition. The drunkards of the world have never been conspicuous by their numbers. The drinkers who have notably lowered their efficiency or spent excessive amounts of money for liquor have not exceeded a small minority. Even if we think that alcoholic liquor has done some injury to the health or efficiency of the majority of those using it, we must concede that, in most cases, the injury was not great as compared with the other evil experiences and follies of mankind. Let us not lose our sense of proportion. The money spent for drink might, indeed, have been wisely laid out for food, clothing, shelter, intellectual improvement, charity and religion, but so might the expenditures for theatres and "movies," banquets and elaborate social functions, unnecessary amusements and travel, tobacco, tea and coffee, to say nothing of jazz music, chewing-gum, soda fountain products, wasteful changes of fashion and a hundred other relatively irrational objects.

"Excessive expenditures" for alcoholic liquor should be measured not only by comparison with other unnecessary expenditures, but also in relation to the amount of innocent satisfaction obtained by the drinkers. One of the most surprising features of the controversy on this subject is the obstinate refusal of extremists to admit that men have always and everywhere got comfort out of alcoholic drink, and that, for the great majority, that comfort has been as real, as effective and as rational as that obtained from any equal outlay of money for things which are not strict necessities.

While I believe that the foregoing is a conservative statement of the relatively small injury caused by liquor to the great majority of its consumers, I have a lively realization of the evil that it has always brought to a minority. The traffic ought to be so regulated as to reduce the evil to the lowest dimensions consistent with reasonable human liberty. It is so regulated in the greater part of Canada, particularly in the province of Quebec. Alcoholic liquors are sold by the government under such conditions as make them not unduly easy to obtain. With this system of strict regulation is combined total prohibition in those towns and other local areas where that arrangement is approved by an effective majority. For two reasons this is a rational and feasible kind of prohibition: first, because it is desired by a sufficient proportion of the people to make it enforceable; second, because it does not prevent the more eager drink-lovers from lawfully obtaining liquor in some distant selling-place. The Quebec plan offers the best solution of the liquor problem that has yet been devised. It puts the maximum practicable restriction upon the number and the facilities of the liquor shops, and it creates all the difficulty for the drinker that is compatible with public approval and reasonable liberty.

The word "liberty" has been used with great frequency throughout this discussion. It has not been over-emphasized. The greater part of the opposition to national prohibition is based not so much upon human thirst as upon human resentment. The average man regards prohibition as an unnecessary and unjustified assault upon personal freedom and natural rights. He sees clear through the sophistry which represents prohibition as merely the suppression of a harmful social institution and puts the use of liquor on the same moral plane as the use of narcotics. The average man thinks that a much fairer comparison could be drawn between liquor and automobiles. He believes that as good a case could be made out for the total prohibition of the latter as of the former. I am inclined to think he is right.

Second only to the blindness of prohibition advocates with regard to the average man's passion for freedom is their failure to see the harm done to character-development when legislation is unwisely substituted for self-control. Few movements in history are more impressive than the growth of total abstinence in the United States. Within my own lifetime this gospel and practice had effected an enormous improvement, not only in the habits of millions of individuals but in the public attitude toward alcoholic liquor. Steadily, and in many places rapidly, the traffic was coming under such social control that within half a century its evils would have been reduced to negligible dimensions. The organized champions of prohibition were not satisfied with this sound and steady progress. In an evil hour they decided to abandon the methods of self-control and local control in favor of compulsion by national enactment.

Well, the method of national compulsion is doing more harm than good, and the movement for voluntary abstention has been destroyed. When a more rational system of legislative control has finally been substituted for the present anarchical condition, the great task of educating to total abstinence will have to be undertaken all over again. Such is the penalty of attempting a fundamentally wrong kind of social legislation, of not realizing the limits of compulsion.

Throughout this paper I have considered social legislation in its relations to individual human beings. I have studiously avoided the word "community." Apart from its component individuals, the community is a mere abstraction. It is the usual recourse of extremists when they seek to justify an invasion of liberty. They speak pompously of curtailing individual freedom in the interest of the community, when the real effect of their proposals is either to benefit a small minority or to coerce the majority into refraining from conduct which in their opinion is bad for the majority. Social legislation which cannot be justified in terms of individual welfare is incapable of justification.

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SUBSTITUTES FOR THOUGHT

By WILLIAM C. MURPHY, JR.

MAN has always attempted to excuse the more nonsensical of his inventions by ascribing them to God. The system is not without merit; it is a sop to human reason and there is no record of a protest from the Almighty.

Perhaps no human contrivance has greater cause for offering an apology to reason than that queer figure of speech called the slogan. Hence it is not surprising to find the statement, "Slogans or war-cries, equally with standards or banners, appear to me to be of divine origin," in the introduction which John Fenwick, of Ellison-place, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, wrote in 1851 for Michael Aislabie Denham's quaint little volume, Slogans of the North of England. It is curious, by the way, that this book is the only publication catalogued under the topic Slogans in all the miles and miles of ink on paper in the Library of Congress. An inviting field for useless research has been overlooked.

Slogans originally—or at least as far as the record goes—were war-cries. The etymon of the word shows that. It is reported that Agamemnon, at the siege of Troy, adopted a modest slogan of which the clumsy English rendition is: The Fear of Mortals Agamemnon Holds. History teaches that Constantine the Great, after the victory which gave him control of the Roman empire, adopted the slogan In Hoc Signo Vinces, which is the earliest recorded usage of the Gott Mitt Uns of more recent times. And Henry V, after Agincourt, adopted the slogan which later became a motto, Non Nobis Domine. This, of course, was before the invention of modern artillery, which, according to another noted warrior, is most potent in obtaining the favor of heaven in warfare.

The pagans of antiquity, with their assortment of gods and goddesses, were never at loss to obtain supernatural sanction for any of their various undertakings. If one deity were temporarily indisposed or otherwise engaged at the moment, it was always easy to arrange for the services of another. Thus there was no inherent difficulty in enlisting various gods on opposite sides in wars and battles—and, of course, such enlistments were duly advertised by appropriate slogans. Monotheistic Christianity, however, presented some difficulties to this practice. So recourse was had to the saints, and this led to the birth of a very famous collection of slogans—Saint George for England, Saint Denis for France, Saint Andrew for Scotland, and as many more as there were nationalities in the then known world. If all of these hagiological champions attended to the duties assigned them by their earthly clients, the court of heaven must have been a far from tranquil place during the ages of faith.

All successful slogans have two definite characteristics: they are couched in words of common usage, and they have no unmistakable meaning. Thus they serve admirably as substitutes for thought, and, since thought is undoubtedly the most unpopular of human occupations, the slogan fills a very acute demand. Imagine a Democrat explaining why he is a Democrat without using the phrases Tariff for Revenue Only, or States' Rights! Or try to picture a Republican justifying his existence without piously intoning Prosperity! or Coolidge Economy! All of which are slogans in good standing and as meaningful as Take the Government out of Business, which heralded the plundering of the Teapot Dome and Elk Hills naval oil reserves.

A well-nigh perfect illustration of the importance of the second characteristic of a successful slogan, namely, that it shall have no definite meaning, may be constructed from the experience of the United States during the days preceding the great struggle for the site of a radio station on the Island of Yap. We had then the spectacle of a nation electing its President to the accompaniment of Too Proud to Fight, and He Kept Us out of War; and, within a year, and with hardly a murmur of popular dissent, following that same President into war to the tune of War to End War, and Make the World Safe for Democracy.

Naturally, a boob-catcher so effective as the slogan has not been neglected by our forward-looking devotees of the modern cult of "service." No business nowadays, from the running of a municipal government to the merchandising of reform movements and patent remedies, is complete without a slogan.

The importance of the slogan has been officially recognized by the Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America. That most reverend organization maintains what might be called a register of slogans, in which are listed all of the business-getting battle-cries adopted by various municipalities. An official of the Chamber sees to it that this list is kept strictly up to date, that new slogans are added when notification of their adoption has been received, and discarded ones eliminated. For what could be more disrespectful on the part of an apostle of service, addressing the Chamber of Commerce of Muscatine, Iowa, than to be convicted of ignorance of the fact that the slogan of that tall-corn metropolis is Come Blow Your Whistle with Us?

This register maintained by the national Chamber of Commerce varies in size as the cause of service waxes or wanes. The list which I have now before me contains 160 slogans officially adopted by as many American cities. Akron, Ohio—Akron, the City of Opportunity—leads all the rest, like Abou Ben Adhem, and for the same reason. York, Nebraska—York, Your Center of Service—brings up the rear.

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A surprising variety of literary tastes is revealed by this collection. Alliteration seems to be a favored device of the slogan-makers; no less than eight of the slogans listed are 100 percent alliterative. The self-declared hub of the universe heads this select group with Bigger, Busier, Better Boston. There is no reference to beans, though even baked beans might have been included without spoiling the figure.

Next comes the neat little tongue-twister telling the world of the virtues of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania: Chambersburg Constantly Challenges Comparison. The Maryland Free State presents Cumberland Creates Confidence. And from North Carolina comes the invitation Hear Hickory Hum, as a bait to the curious.

Lansing, Michigan, apparently loyal to the New England tradition exemplified by Boston, describes herself as Larger, Livelier, Lovelier Lansing. Pittsburgh apologizes for the smoke with Pittsburgh Promotes Progress, and Shreveport, Louisiana, where the oil flows very freely at times, tells anyone who may be interested that Shreveport Spells Success. Watch Wichita Win is the optimistic admonition from the state of bootleg cigarets and William Allen White.

Montebello, California, has devised a real American combination of beauty and utility. According to its slogan, it is The City of Flowers with an Oil-Field Payroll. Mott Is the Spot is the way that enterprising little North Dakota city directs those who would find it on the county map.

Muncie, Indiana, where newsboys are put in jail for selling papers which refer disrespectfully to kleagles, judges and dragons, gives solemn assurance to a waiting world that it is An Ideal American City.

One of the most interesting manifestations of the slogan-making mind comes from the metropolis of Missouri—St. Louis, the City Surrounded by the United States: a war-cry probably devised "south of Chouteau Avenue."

It is very sad that in all ages there are those who scoff at sacred things, slogans not excepted. This tendency probably will not be eradicated entirely until men cease trying to impute sanctity to their own foolishness. Once more I am indebted to Mr. Fenwick for his notes in the introduction to Slogans of the North of England, in which he discusses the slogan Senatus Populus Que Romanus which, in the abbreviation S. P. Q. R., adorned the ensigns of ancient Rome. Mr. Fenwick says:

> The letters S. P. Q. R. are acrostical, and have been the occasion of much humor. The Sibyls read them, Serva Populum Quem Redimisti; the Venerable Bede, Stultus Populus Quaerit Romam; the French, Si Peu Que Rien; the Italian, Sono Poltroni Questi Romani; the German Protestants, Sublato Papa Quietam Regnum; and the German Roman Catholics, Salus Papae Quies Regni. It was a good jest, if it be true, that one seeing S. P. Q. R. written in a new Pope's chamber, interpreted them Sancte Pater Quare Rides? The Pope made an answer like a good Hebrean, reading the letters backwards, R. Q. P. S.: Rideo Quia Papa Sum.

THE RENAISSANCE OF MACHIAVELLI

By HARVEY WICKHAM

(*This is the second of two papers to appear in The Commonweal presenting a re-examination of the character and doctrines of Machiavelli.—The Editors.*)

IN A letter to Vettori, dated December 10, 1513, Machiavelli has left a description of his life in exile, at once so eloquent and so revealing as to the private character of the man that common fairness demands at least a short, condensed quotation.

He begins by referring to his expulsion from Florence and other painful events attendant upon the return of the Medici:

> Since my last misfortune, I have led a quiet country life. I spent September in snaring thrushes, but at the end of the month even this sport failed me. So I rise with the sun in the morning, and go into one of the woods for a couple of hours to pass some time with the woodcutters, who have always some troubles to tell me, either of their own or their neighbors.
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> On leaving the wood, I go to a spring, and thence up to my uccellare, with a book under my arm—either Dante, Petrarch, or one of the minor poets, such as Tibullus or Ovid. I read their amorous transports, and the history of their lives, recalling my own to my mind, and time passes pleasantly in these meditations. Then I take myself to the inn by the roadside, chat with passers-by, ask news of the places whence they come, hear various things and note the varied tastes and diverse fancies of mankind. This carries me to the dinner hour, when in the company of my brood I swallow whatever fare this poor little place of mine . . . can afford me.
>
> Dinner over, I go back to the inn, where I generally find the host, a butcher, a miller and a couple of brick-makers. I mix with these boors the whole day, playing at cricca and at tric-trac, which games give rise to a thousand quarrels and much exchange of bad language. At nightfall I return home and seek my writing room, and, divesting myself on its threshold of my rustic garments, I assume courtly attire; and thus suitably clothed, enter within the ancient courts of ancient men, by whom, being cordially welcomed, I am fed with the food that alone is mine and for which I was born.
>
> These men in their humanity reply to me, and for the space of four hours I feel no weariness, remember no trouble, no longer fear poverty, no longer fear death. And since Dante says that there could be no science without retaining that which is heard, I have recorded that which I have acquired from the conversation of these worthies, and composed a pamphlet.

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The snaring of the thrushes may seem a symbolic if not very bloody recreation for this supposed snarer of men, and the recalling of the history of his loves to his mind lends color to his reputation for debauchery. But the wood-cutters, the brick-makers and the cricca are part of a picture so charming, so innocent, so bucolic, that one asks—can it truly have been drawn by Machiavelli?

Moreover, the "loves" themselves lose their saturnalian character upon investigation. Niccolo once more was but imitating his favorite ancients. And as Athenian and Roman youth were wont to write scandalously to each other, so much Machiavelli to Vettori, if only as a literary exercise. There is nothing to show that his amours went beyond the ordinary gallantries of the period, and his private life would easily stand comparison with that of the average respected citizen of the present time. He was no Giles de Reies, and his affection for his family shines unmistakably through all the clouds of calumny which have been suffered to gather about his name.

But the "pamphlet" was a different matter. He was, in fact, writing two, The Prince, and Discourses upon Titus Livy—the one describing the art of government from the standpoint of a dictator, the other as it should be practised in a republic. As was to be expected, they are scholarly works enlivened with the light touches of a witty pen; and in them, in addition to the wealth of classical example, all the material which the author has collected during his long years as a diplomat, reappears. But it has undergone a strange sea change.

What has happened to the man? The very course of certain roads, once described with painstaking accuracy in the Reports, has been altered to suit some new purpose. The humble secretary of the Ten, who could be deceived by nobody, now seems to be the victim of phantoms. Thus Caesar Borgia, in the first Decennale (a lively history in rhyme of the decade ending in 1504) depicted as "a man without compassion, the hydra, the basilisk, rebellious to Christ, deserving of the most wretched end," emerges as the prince par excellence.

The gentle soul (for Machiavelli was a gentle soul) has revolted. He has seen Florence and Pisa at each other's throats and thrown together with Rome and Venice into a caldron of intrigue and bloodshed, stirred year after year by invasions from France, interference from Spain, the contending ambitions of the Medici, the Borgia, the Sforza, the Orsini, the Colonna and other families of nobles. He has heard of nobody since Dante who could clearly envisage a nation beyond and above the multitude of factions. He has spent almost a lifetime in investigating at first hand the means whereby men rule and become powerful, and he thinks he has found the secret.

This is what has happened to poor Niccolo, a vision —vast, shadowy, beautiful—whose name is Italy. And it has blinded him. For the secret of power, as he understands it, is unscrupulous cunning and ruthless cruelty. Florence, "dominated and divided by the doctrines of that great Savonarola, who, filled with divine virtue, fascinated her by his words," fell back into the hands of the Medici. The "weaponless prophet" ended upon the scaffold. The ideal prince whose coming he evokes shall meet with no such fate, if getting rid of virtue, divine or otherwise, can aid him.

> For whereas laws, agreements and contracts bind private individuals to keep faith, arms alone avail with potentates. . . .
>
> Where it is a question of the welfare of our country, we must admit of no considerations of justice or injustice, of mercy or cruelty, of praise or ignominy, but putting all else aside must adopt whatever course will save its existence. . . .
>
> A prince should know how to assume the beast nature both of the fox and the lion, for the lion cannot defend himself against snares nor the fox against wolves. Therefore a prudent lord neither can nor should observe faith when such observance might be to his injury. But it is necessary to give a good coloring to your nature, and be a great dissembler and dissimulator, because men then readily allow themselves to be deceived. . . .
>
> And it is a general rule that men should be either killed or caressed, because they can take revenge for light injuries but cannot for grave. The injury, therefore, should be so grave as to be beyond all risk of reprisals. He who conquers a free city and does not destroy it may expect to be destroyed by it, since it will always rebel, urged by the great love of liberty that is inextinguishable in free men's minds. . . .
>
> Cruelties may be said to be well done, if it may be permitted thus to speak of evil deeds, which are done suddenly for the sake of establishing a safe position, and not continued afterward. . . .

Such extracts could be multiplied indefinitely. Their author had made himself both immortal and infamous at a bound.

No doubt his underlying idea is sound. The duties of a sovereign are different from those of a private citizen. If for "cruelties" he had substituted the word "punishments," and for "prince" the word "state," he would have been better understood. For we do not call it murder when a malefactor is hanged by due process of law, nor do we cry treachery if now and then a policeman wears a suit of mufti.

Moreover there is no question as to the purity of Machiavelli's motive. He was attempting to inspire the ruling prince of the Medici to work for the broad good of a nation yet to be, instead of wasting himself over the petty ambitions of his house. Thus it is a new prince, whose kingdom is as yet unwon, whose problems are dealt with. The writer's own ideal was a mixed government, with king, nobles and a parliament, each acting as a check upon the extravagances of the others.

But he went too far. Sheer patriotism had made

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him drunk. For it may not be permitted "thus to speak of evil deeds." Nor would it be difficult to refute his theories with his own words. The love of liberty is indeed inextinguishable in free men's minds, nor is it possible to make the injury so grave as to put its perpetrator beyond all risk of reprisals. The prince who permits no considerations of justice or injustice to move him must reckon with the indignation of all mankind. He may caress some, but cannot very well kill all.

So, much as we may commend Machiavelli for puncturing some of the hollow phrases of liberalism, we must in the end agree with Queen Christina of Sweden, who, reading the first French translation of these works, began by writing "Cela est vrai, ah que cela est bien dit!" along their margins; continued with such phrases as "Que terrible commandement!" and ended with, "Je n'en croi rien."

Moi aussi, je n'en croi rien. Sound as much of this new science of politics undoubtedly is, the language which expresses it is often diabolical. Here is no half-great man, but a great half-man. "In the State according to Machiavelli," says Schlegel, "nothing is known of God." No wonder, then, that Frederick the Great of Prussia, who in practice followed the worst of these doctrines, was himself Machiavellian enough to write an "Antimachiavel" in which he pretends to repudiate them.

But what of Machiavelli? His pamphlets having failed to quicken the spark of noble endeavor in any of his contemporaries, he set himself to the writing of some admirable histories under the patronage of the Vatican—and to the composition of satirical comedies like Mandragola and the Clizia, wherein there is much wit, no religion, and little decency. The very soul of the man seemed to be dying.

Then Florence once more lifted up her head among free states. Old times seemed to be coming back again. He looked forward to being restored to office. But it was not to be. Nobody seemed to think of the faithful secretary of Soderini's time, and a certain Francesco Tarugi was nominated in his stead.

"To be prohibited from serving his country," says Villari, "was a blow that Niccolo Machiavelli could not survive." Nor did he. An old stomach ailment became virulent. He had made a will in which his wife, referred to in terms of unaltered affection, was named executrix. His family was about him. So he called in Fra Matteo, confessed his sins, and passed, on June 22, 1527. The great half-man had become whole.

Italy today does him honor. She has found her prince. The government has an aristocracy and a parliament of a sort quite after Machiavelli's heart. But is this prince, who calls himself "il Duce," following Niccolo the half-man or Niccolo the whole? It is a question of the gravest importance to the world. Fascismo is a challenge to liberal government everywhere, and Italy surrounds Rome. In seeking an answer to a question like this, we should turn a deaf ear to prejudiced voices and give a careful and impartial scrutiny to the facts of contemporary history.

The question has received a thousand hopeful answers from recent history, of which the most important, perhaps, is the reorganization of the Italian schools. How the Herbartian, or positivistic pedagogy predominant at the beginning of the century has been superseded by a system recognizing religious instruction as the foundation of all true education, and how far the reforms (now in charge of Minister Pietro Fedele) have succeeded in realizing the Catholic ideal, is a subject too complicated to be dealt with in this article. Suffice it to say that Machiavelli's forgetfulness of God is not being imitated, however potent the Florentine's spirit may be in shaping the merely political destinies of the country.

Death Comes to All

Once Heraclitus lived in grief and pain,
And in the darkness scribbled poetry;
Catullus once loved Lesbia with disdain,
And pleaded with the gods to set him free.
But death soon granted each a final day,
And they fell silent, and were laid away.

Magdalen hid her hair beneath a veil,
And from the paths of pleasure walked apart;
Sir Galahad went forth to seek the Grail,
And let no proud desire stain his heart.
But clay must in the end return to clay,
And they were clothed in black, and laid away.

Tristan and Iseult lived for many years,
Vainly extending hands to helpless hands,
Penelope's whole life was bathed in tears,
Mourning Ulysses lost in foreign lands.
But love survives not physical decay;
They ceased to love when they were laid away.

Death comes alike to ignorant and wise,
Comes to the weeping and the frivolous,
Comes like a dark doom or a golden prize,
With strong and feeble is victorious.
Death comes to lovers, be they sad or gay,
And they fall silent, and are laid away.

Whoso he touches on the throat or face,
Whoso he fetters by the wrists or feet,
Are never found again in any place,
In any tavern or in any street.
They are not at the dance or at the play,
But are on hidden couches laid away.

Oh, poets, write before the brief day closes;
Oh, saints, pray loudly while you have your breath;
Oh, lovers, laugh, and send each other roses,
While yet you are indifferent to death.
Oh, sing or play or love if now you may,
Scarce will you cease when you'll be laid away.

HELENE MULLINS.

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MYSTERIES AND MAURICE BARRÈS

By KATHERINE BRÉGY

IT WAS rather long ago that Walter Bagehot observed: "A really great landscape needs sunlight and bears sunlight: but moonlight is an equalizer of beauties; it gives a romantic unreality to what will not stand the bare truth." And one wondered whether he were right—especially if the romantic part of one had a penchant for moonlight, and the rational part kept suggesting that it might be very difficult to tell in advance whether any landscape would prove perfect or not. Decidedly, sunlight demanded that courage and confidence which French devotional writers were always talking about.

Maurice Barrès had, evidently, that courage and that confidence. He loved "broad daylight sweeping the plain, like a mighty eye from which nothing can be hidden"; and in the last book from his hand and heart, that exquisite group of papers destined to be published posthumously, his one preoccupation was to declare from the housetops what the most of humanity learn (if they learn at all) by a whisper in the ear—in fact, to reveal Mysteries by Daylight.* What sort of mysteries? Subtly and suggestively enough, his first subject is the Sibyl. The Sibyl of Auxerre, as it happens, waiting wistfully as a discrowned queen behind the altar of that venerable sanctuary—as of old her superseded sisters sought and found shelter, "by divine courtesy," in the outer porch of the Christian Church. She is, of course, but a survival of that mysterious line of royal women who down through the ages have held on high the torch of feminine intuition, inspiration—whatever you will, that completes and often even dares to contradict the thing known as "worldly wisdom." What was the Sibyl—sorceress, witch, mighty priestess, virgin saint? Barrès asks the question musingly, reverently: but he does not answer it. Seemingly she was the symbol of enthusiasm, of ecstasy, of what a modern dramatist has called "the madness which keeps the world alive." And perhaps —who knows?—we may be returning and recapturing some of her secrets in our new recognition of the subconscious mind. He who loves both mysteries and sunlight is unwilling to dogmatize about so delicate a creature. He merely suggests that in recognizing her, the Church saluted afar off and implicitly what she was to recognize in so many of her chosen souls—the possibility of direct contact with Divinity, the particular, perilous illumination of the "little band."

As a footnote (or what Mr. Frost would probably call a grace note) to this discussion of the Sibyl comes the charming little paper dedicated to The Sign of the Spirit. For "Esprit" is no other than a vagrant pigeon which flew into the author's Paris studio from the midst of a bitter storm, and was harbored with long-suffering hospitality—partly because Barrès felt romantically certain this was the identical pigeon he had once seen perched upon the shoulder of the Auxerre lady, partially because he liked to maintain through this feathered wanderer certain "contacts with the invisible." He had traveled far enough to believe there might be little difference between "a gracious action and a beautiful poem"; declaring, as Francis Thompson declared in slightly different words, that virtue and genius are different aspects of the grace of God.

Like "Esprit" himself, we find ourselves hovering above the outposts of mysticism. For what, indeed, are the authentic mysteries of life but outposts of that more profound initiation—the dance of human and superhuman shadows before the Ark of the Spirit? Maurice Barrès delights in every phase of that dance. He plunges into the study of the ancient magic by which men have dreamed they may evoke the unknown past and future. There is music, for instance: music "allied to the forces of the universe, which it may regulate or disturb." And that we may not so lightly play with its potentialities of confusion and excitement, he gives us the weird tale of the Chinese princess who captured from the desert a little song which "pierced the night like a poisoned arrow"—both winning and losing her warrior lover by this "music of perdition." There are hints of necromancy here, such necromancy as Paul Claudel throws about us in his oriental drama, Le Repos du Septième Jour. And hints of all the immemorial wisdom and immemorial foolishness of the earth are in his study of amulets—the curiously carved bits of basalt or amethyst, the scarabeus, above all the wrought turquoise which Barrès cherished for its ethereal loveliness as well as for its talismanic potency. What dreams they conjure in his ruminating and romanesque mind! Memories of El Azhan sitting among his pupils, outraging them with his horror of the naked soul; memories of Solomon and Balkis, turning from the pursuit of wisdom to the pursuit of love. . . .

And in his apostrophe (pure poetry in prose, as becomes its subject) to another bird, the poignant but domestic robin, he puts clearly at last the question which has been hinted throughout these papers—Shall we not one day find the unity of all our ecstasy, all our experience? He is haunted by visions of that synthesis of wisdom which has been the goal of the mystic in every age. He will ask of the faithful dead the solution which they alone, perhaps, can give—the solution of those "thousand dreams which seem always on the point of becoming thoughts." For walking among the tombs of those who may still watch over the works of their hands, or in tall forests, or in the secret depths of our own conscience, he finds hints of un-

*Le Mystère en Pleine Lumière, par Maurice Barrès. Paris: Librairie Plon. 1926.

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known, undreamed powers. And Maurice Barrès, student of national problems, diarist of the great war, would escape at last far from "gross and incomplete realities." He would recapture the "moments when alone we live truly"—"perceiving through sorrow or terror or love the palpitations of nature and of the soul."

More objective, but still passing easily from the particular to the universal, are two idyls of places. The first is a radiant study of spring at Mirabeau, where memories of the Revolution pass like storm-clouds over the old chateau, and the ghostly figures of those antithetical brothers—Mirabeau "the orator," suberb, self centered, self deceiving, and the gentle Bailli, sacrificing himself to a doomed ideal—strive for mastery. More permeating still through all that lovely and ancient country is the memory of Mistral and his mystic music—Mistral who would extend the "paix constantinienne" to the little local deities of paganism, persisting in Provençal shadows and Provençal memories very much as the Sibyl herself persisted elsewhere. For Barrès loved and longed to biographize Mistral, his "knight of Sainte Estelle"; who bade men, when life seemed too wearisome, to dazzle and soothe their eyes with the multitudinous stars of the night sky.

But better than the brightness of the South, Barrès loved always the greyness of his own Lorraine, and the longest paper in this whole book is a study (left unfinished when death drew the pen from his hand) of his birthplace, Charmes, and its gentle artist-son Claude Gelée. Both by temperament and by these Lorraine loyalties, Monsieur Barrès was a predestined interpreter of Jeanne d' Arc, and it is common knowledge how early he championed the cause of her canonization. So he gives us here three fine but fragmentary musings upon the girlhood of her "whose shadow floods the valley like a mysterious moonlight." From the records of the trial and the rehabilitation he borrows little tender depositions of the neighbors about that marvelous Jeannette who once walked and even danced among them. Again he evokes the old pagan memories of the countryside, surviving in the fairy legends which were to play their sinister role in the undoing of the pucelle—as he invokes the heroic Christian memories of the Gallo-Roman period, which were truly part of her background. But although Barrès believed passionately that Lorraine was a country "where wings naturally unfolded," he knew that the marvelous maid could no more be explained than she could be contained by her misty birthplace.

The very keynote and consummation of his symphonic volume are found, curiously enough, in a paper called The Testament of Eugène Delacroix—an appreciation of that painter's ultima verba, upon the "tapestried" walls of the Angel Chapel at Saint Sulpice. Jacob Wrestling with the Angel—it is this sublime and subtle story which Barrès insists means everything that any parable or any work of art can mean to each generation reacting to it, that becomes the touchstone of his general and particular judgment. It is, of course, the eternal combat of life: the individual, stripped of all distractions, demanding of destiny the fulfillment, the benediction which he has won by his own sweat and even his own blood. It is the heroic ideal—the costly "step ahead"—humanity claiming again his sonship to God. But it must also be definitely personal, since only the personal can touch man deeply; and so Jacob is Delacroix himself—he is Maurice Barrès. In a particular sense he is the artist, setting his face to go up to the Jerusalem of his highest achievement, exerting every effort, suffering every agony in the immense creative "courage" of art—and knowing that his creation must be its own reward. Evidently, too, the artist, or the soul, must have lived greatly to be ready for the test of this ultimate moment; since the Angel gives no warning when his path shall suddenly cross our own, and "Inspiration brings nothing from without—it can animate only what has already become part of our own flesh and blood."

The austere spirituality of the old Delacroix speaking so simply, so profoundly in his young, naked David who has turned aside from the "easy way" of the commonplace and the "great bazaar of romanticism" for this lonely conflict, comes as benediction and challenge, too, to Barrès. Once again he is off on his perpetual quest of the ultimate, absolute truth of things—'les rapports des choses." To achieve the final unity of art and of life—it is for this that he would bring his mysteries out of the moonlight into clearest sunlight. But he is wise enough to know that he will never quite succeed. By fragments, by symbols, he himself has traveled on: from the cult of individualism to the cult of patriotism, from the love of old churches to the love of the old Church. And having known the blessedness of hunger and thirst, he will torture himself no longer, but will rest now in the blessedness of her quiet, inclusive wisdom. "How all these things fall into their place in a corner of the Catholic Church, and what heights of spiritual order brood over Saint Sulpice!" he muses, looking about this little Angel Chapel where he has dreamed for almost thirty years. "Here was an old wall, damp, soulless, and now forevermore it is transmuted into a Burning Bush"—because human art and human experience have both been put to the service of the revelation which can never be wholly revealed, which is always a "step ahead"—the step into eternity.

Is it not the most valid proof of Maurice Barrès's initiation that, even brought out into the daylight, his mysteries remain—mysteries?

Sound

In city streets I have found
Silence in sound;
But where mountains touch the sky,
Silence is a cry.

BORGHILD LEE.

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MOUNT ANGEL

By NELSON COLLINS

THE devastating fire of September, 1926, at Mount Angel, Oregon, was a grave loss to the Benedictine order of the Catholic Church, but my own thoughts and griefs about it have not been particularly either Catholic or Benedictine. I grieved for the loss of the boys' school there, Mount Angel Preparatory School and Junior College. I have seen a great deal of schools at one time and another, public schools, private schools, church schools, colleges and universities. I never saw one that interested me more. It was not the best school of its kind I had ever seen, not by a long way, because it had not been years enough in being to have perfected its entire program of scholarship, or to be completely sure of the firm financial basis that is necessary. But its intentions were right. Anyone could see that at the end of a day's visit there, and could steadily confirm it by recurring visits.

The Benedictine monks of Mount Angel maintain their monastery, their seminary for the training of clergy in languages and theology; they maintain a great farm, and play an active part thereby in the practical agricultural life of all that large and thoroughly tilled valley district; and they have an important printing plant. These things are interesting and significant, but my own interest there has always mainly been in the growth of the school for boys. A boy paid $300 a year and got, for ten months of that year, his schooling, his housing, his food, his medical attention, his athletics, his library and laboratory facilities. There were about 250 boys from Oregon, Washington and Idaho who each year had that chance.

I never could see altogether how the Benedictines there at Mount Angel managed it. As a matter of fact, they did not quite manage it, even before the financial strain of their disastrous fire. They cheerfully went three or four thousand dollars in the hole on the proposition each year, hoping steadily that the boys' school would get out of the red as time progressed, but content to pay that amount into the school yearly from other funds until a blessed, "self-contained" solvency should be secured. They trusted a goodly number of the boys to get their schooling then, and pay it back after they should be earning. They gave scholarships to some needy boys, which enabled them to have the schooling without obligation to pay the money then or thereafter. Twenty percent of their students were not even boys out of Catholic families. But the price and the quality of residence and instruction that Mount Angel offered all these boys, Catholic or non-Catholic, well-to-do or scraping along of necessity while pioneering parents were getting a toe-hold on ranches and in towns throughout this Pacific Northwest, were what caught my attention from the first time I visited Mount Angel. Boys of parents in easy circumstances were there in abundance, I observed; but from all the corners of the three northwestern states were these others, too, who, if the tuition had been even $100 more, could not have had such an education or such surroundings. They would have had to study in less competently instructed and less well-equipped schools, and in the isolation of their home districts, away from the great development that association with the other boys, with so splendid a countryside and with so manly and able a group of older men can give.

It would have been easy for the Benedictines to cut their tuition loss entirely by letting the educational plant and program dwindle a little, instead of keeping it at peak, and keeping it not only going but growing. The fresh, neat halls and classrooms, the tiled and bright lavatories, the ample dormitories for the boys, might have been neglected and over-crowded. But they never were. The dining-room and its service and its meals might have been less excellently adapted to the boys in its appetizing plainness, but that never happened. It would have been easy to let the library stand as it was ten years ago, good enough to make a showing; but its shelves increased and the books filling them were significant and interesting in all the ranges of thought and activity. A certain type of befuddled piety might have neglected laboratory development as a devotional gesture as well as an economic necessity, but under the impetus of the two recent rectors its technical equipment for physics, chemistry and biology grew, before the fire, beyond all natural expectation in a school with so many other expenses.

The monks might have insisted on carrying the whole load of teaching themselves, in one fashion or another, to save the real financial burden of an outside staff. But faculty men from the University of Oregon, from Oregon Agricultural College, from Notre Dame University, were brought in to round out the program. By preference, they were Catholic scholars trained in these institutions, but that was not always the case. Meanwhile, the Benedictines were seeing to it that their own oncoming, promising young monks were following their training in vocation with training in all the subjects the boys' school and college required. These monks will, by their free contribution of service, increasingly ease off the salary list in the school: but it is a mark of integrity and high intelligence that the Benedictine management did not supinely wait during the intervening years for their own young men to be ready in order to save that money.

I was at Mount Angel again the other day and saw the foundations for the rebuilding. For residential and community necessities, the monastery, the essential parts of a church and the seminary building have to come first. But the excavated site for the new school for boys lies lengthwise of the noble forested hill that looks out over miles of tilled valley farm-lands toward Portland, toward Salem, the state capital, toward the Cascades, toward the coastal hills. With a grassy slope between, the town of Mount Angel lies in full view. I am anxious to see the time when boys again,

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boys in easy circumstances and boys in hard, out of these northwestern cities and out of the forests and the plains, will lean together against the ornamental cement balustrade that edges the drop of the hill; will feel the influence of that far-flung, fruitful, varied landscape, and the strong serenity of the established Benedictine method and mood of life, at the same time that there are equally close at hand for them the strenuous activities of the athletic grounds and the laboratories, the library and the classrooms.

The school will have a separate building for itself, instead of being built in with the whole monastic establishment, as was the case formerly. In addition to this ample building, the structure that is to be the library and museum combined will have an entire floor given over to laboratories for chemistry, physics and biology, specially designed to fit all the technical demands of these sciences in their latest developments. A great deal of money will have to be found over and above the insufficient insurance just to get the buildings erected, but I confess my own impatience to see the library, so little of which was saved, getting back promptly to its old wide and full range; for there, after all, is the heart of any school.

A NOTE ON BEETHOVEN

AMONG the interesting contents of The Musical Quarterly (G. Schirmer, Incorporated, New York) which give this publication the highest place among American periodicals devoted to music, there appears in a recent number (devoted to the Beethoven centenary) a study by Carl Engel on the master's Opus 3, the Envoi de Vienne, the first work of his genius to be performed in England.

The date of this performance is debated by the musical historians. However, 1794 seems to be best established as the year of a pretty episode which Mr. Engel outlines for us, following the reminiscences given by William Gardiner in his three volumes of Music and Friends, the two first of which were published in 1838 and the last in 1853.

In volume one of Music and Friends, we find this entry on page 112:

"The Honorable Mrs. Bowater, daughter of the Earl of Feversham, was on a visit to the Elector-Palatine at Bonn upon the Rhine, when the French invaded the Low Countries, and was compelled hastily to leave that place where she had been dwelling many years. The Abbé Dobler, chaplain to the Elector, accompanied her to Hamburg with the full intention of returning; but, while there, he was declared an emigrant. She, with her sister, Lady Radnor, having large possessions in Leicestershire, offered the Abbé a domicile in England; they arrived at Leicester about the year 1793, and remained there till the mansion at Old Dalby was prepared for their reception. The Abbé, an accomplished gentleman possessing the taste in music for which the Germans are so justly celebrated, soon awakened the attention of the neighborhood by the melodious tone of his violin. The Elector of Cologne, in his magnificent chateau at Bonn, like Frederick the Great, had a concert every evening at six o'clock, which his chaplain, the Abbé, conducted. At this time the celebrated Salomon and Romberg were in the service of the Elector, and formed part of his band. There was also a rough blackheaded lad, son of the innkeeper, who exhibited so striking a talent for music as to attract the notice of my friend. This boy turned out to be that extraordinary genius and sublime composer, Beethoven. The Elector, who was a great patron of music, soon after the development of his mighty mind, placed him under Haydn at Vienna. At this juncture he had just published the violin trio in E flat, when the Abbé, fortunately in the hurry of his departure, put this work into his trunk with some quartettes of Haydn and Wranisky. On arriving at Leicester he sought my acquaintance, and with the assistance of Mr. Valentine, the professor, this trio of Beethoven's was first played in the year 1794, many years previous to its being known in London."

Again in volume three, on page 142, Mr. Gardiner touches on the life at Old Dalby Hall:

"Luckily, the Abbé had placed some money in our government funds, and his only alternative was to proceed to England. Mrs. Bowater and her sister, the Countess of Radnor, had been kept out of their revenues by a disputed title for many years; but eventually they were awarded, by a suit in chancery, an estate of the value of 300,000 pounds. The Abbé was a refined and accomplished gentleman, who wrote and spoke our language correctly; and as a specimen of his style and the nature of our parties, I quote one of his notes, received on a disagreeable rainy morning—'As the day is good for nothing but a dinner and music, Mrs. Bowater hopes for your company at four and a quartet in the evening.' The Abbé, who never traveled without his violin, had luckily put into his fiddle-case a trio composed by Beethoven, just before he set off, which thus in the year 1793 found its way to Leicester. This composition opened to me a new view of the art. It was in a language that so powerfully excited my imagination that all other music appeared tame and spiritless. When I went to town, I inquired for the works of this author, but could learn nothing more than that he was considered a madman and that his music was like himself."

This latter opinion conforms with the statement of Mr. Engel:

"That verdict, no doubt, was reached by many and not all of them music-sellers; but it belongs to a later time than does the latest among the four different years which Gardiner suggests for the first performance of the trio in Leicester. In her Glimpses of Ancient Leicester, Mrs. T. Fielding Johnson speaks of 'the Honorable Mrs. Bowater of Little Dalby Hall, a Roman Catholic lady of property,' who had met the Abbé Clemens Dobler or Dobbeler during her residence on the continent, giving the date of this famous first performance in 1794, several years before it was heard in London."

One of the treasures of the Library of Congress in Washington is Beethoven's autograph copy of this trio in E flat, originally part of the collection of Dr. W. H. Cummings.

THOMAS WALSH.

Protes

Ladies called Helen should never grow old:
That is a name for the launching of ships,
Fragrant, imperial, gallant and gold—
Ladies called Helen should never grow old.
Beauty untarnished those syllables hold,
Music perpetual, honey on lips,
Ladies called Helen should never grow old,
That is a name for the launching of ships.

MARIE BLAKE.

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COMMUNICATIONS

CECIL VERSUS PAGE

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—Where does the conscience of a diplomat enter his work as a practical matter? Most guides to diplomacy quote (almost without exception wrongly) the humorous definition attributed to Wotton: "Diplomat—an honest man sent to lie abroad for the good of his country." Most of those who find it so amusing forget, missing the essence of the pun, that "to lie in such and such a place" meant also to have temporary residence there.

There is a neat problem in diplomacy in the conduct of Walter Hines Page, our ambassador at London during the world war, and in that of Viscount Cecil at the recent conference to limit naval armament.

Page, quite convinced that it was against the interest of the United States to permit a series of petty pinpricks on both sides to lead to a break with England, worked out a policy of his own in opposition to that of the administration. In other words, he served what he considered to be the national interest rather than that of his President and Secretary of State.

Cecil, equally convinced that the policy of his colleagues in government was wrong, nevertheless as delegate to the Geneva conference, carried out that policy not only to the point of failure, but actually to the point which would have produced resentment and ill feeling, had the principal American delegate been anyone but Hugh Gibson, whose perfect knowledge of English public men carried the conference safely over total loss.

There is no question as to the procedure of the diplomatic representative of an absolute monarch. There does seem to be a question as to the duty of the plenipotentiary of a democracy. It is not necessary to hold that he is but the messenger-boy of a department of his government. It may be held that an American ambassador, for instance, should be of equal size with a Secretary of State; that, if he believes a policy to be wrong, he has the right and the duty, in the interest of the nation, to insist on his point of view; and that a Secretary of State should be very cautious in removing him from office because of his own disapproval of that insistence.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

A VIEW OF JUDGE GARY

Reading, Mass.

TO the Editor:—I feel impelled to protest the eulogy of Judge Gary (for such it amounted to) that appeared in the columns of The Commonweal in the issue of August 31. The fulsome praise showered on him by the press of the nation was indeed nauseating, but to have the same thing served up in the pages of The Commonweal is almost inexplicable.

As a Catholic publication, guided by Catholic principles and a well-balanced system of philosophy, it is difficult to understand the mental process by which the editors of your magazine were able to bring themselves to the point of commending in such high-strung phrases the works and deeds of Gary—works and deeds which scarcely ever took into consideration the rights of the worker, as such, but were mainly concerned in keeping him in condition, as would be necessary with any piece of machinery. Business efficiency was the "inspiring" motive. If he advanced the cause of the laboring man, it was through a motive of sheer expediency. A man's life-work in the last analysis is nothing more than a difficult body of principles and beliefs put into practice. If Judge Gary's principles can be squared with the most rudimentary principles of the Catholic Church on the social and economic questions of the day, then one need not despair of squaring the circle.

A departure from the well-traveled road of eulogizing everyone that shuffles off this mortal coil would be a healthy sign. To subject some to the stinging lash of the moral whip might show others the errors of their way before it is too late.

The Commonweal is serving a useful purpose. Let us hope that it will not become an abetter, however indirectly, of the works and deeds of the type of Judge Gary's.

JAMES F. DESMOND.

CATHOLIC ANGLES ON PROHIBITION

Louisville, Ky.

TO the Editor:—Father John J. Curran, president of our Association, has called my attention to the very excellent statement appearing in your editorial of July 27, of which the following is an excerpt:

"It is also quite legitimate to oppose the wetness of Governor Smith, as various Catholic publicists are now doing. An earnest supporter of the Eighteenth Amendment can certainly be a true American, and also an orthodox member of the Church. Such a one is entitled to feel that a man as indulgent toward the pre-prohibition universe as the Governor of New York has proved himself to be must be kept out of the White House at all costs."

There is a different opinion regarding prohibition prevailing in the minds of a great many otherwise well-informed Catholics.

Many more Catholics, in our opinion, would have been allied with the great majority of their fellow-citizens responsible for enacting the Eighteenth Amendment were it not for the fact that the propaganda of the opposition was so misleading and at times even took the form of intimidation.

The Association therefore feels under obligation to The Commonweal in this connection.

P. H. CALLAHAN,
Secretary, Association of Catholics Favoring Prohibition.

GOVERNMENT AND PRICES

Somerville, Mass.

TO the Editor:—In view of the eternal question that prevails concerning the reduction in the cost of living, the thought occurred to me that, if restrictive measures or laws could be enacted and equally enforced to prevent profiteering in the necessaries of life, such as coal, potatoes, etc., where the price to the consumer, after a series of manipulations by commission representatives, is prohibitive and unnecessary, it would have a tendency to reduce the living cost proportionately.

The government is doing a meritorious work in its constant surveillance of every form of irregularity, but its supervision is limited to the observance of the law. I believe that, if the government were given the privilege of penalizing or imprisoning the combinations that arbitrarily establish prices on the necessities of life, it would perform a splendid public service.

WILLIAM H. BASTION.

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SONNETS

Exile

Where mountains have a shrunken skin that seams
And cracks, and where plateaus are saffron jowls
Covered with greying stubble, and where streams
Are tears gone dry, where no coyote howls,
Where no bird flies, where only shadows live
To slink about their dead, nor even sound
Of winds sighs up through lipless teeth to give
An echo life—there will our love be found.

Though it be briefer than the fortnight's rain
That billows flowers on the desert's face,
It shall not bloom the less, that blooms again,
Nor blow less freshly from its hiding place
In azure, white, and crimson to be freed.
Therefore it bides, as patient as a seed.

MADEFREY ODHNER.

Retrospect

Not from a bridge at dusk I view again
The sudden storm that rises in the air,
When sparks of phosphorescence flash and flare
At St. Quentin and Rheims, beyond the Seine.
Nor watch through clamorous nights, with indrawn breath,
The thunder-throated guns' ephemeral glow
Upon denuded meadows, far below,
While 'neath the stars there sways a dance of death.

Not there, but here, where autumn's wonder lies,
Where slanting sun on silver birches poses,
Where wind-blown asters bend beneath our eyes,
Where crickets shrill through silence when dusk closes,
There still comes back, unbidden, swift and fleet,
A ghostly flare—a thousand marching feet.

ANTONIA Y. SCHWAB.

Buck Fever

Words are damp cartridges that poets use
To charge the barrel of their smooth-bored lines,
Then, gun in hand, they stalk with smoldering fuse
Across world meadows, sense-alert for signs
Of flying wonder and the furry hare,
Of ermine beauty that eludes their aim;
And hungry, home they come, their only fare
Fragments and visions of uncaptured game.

Sometimes they glimpse in groves of shadowy wood
A crimson doe with gold horns on her head;
Trembling, they aim; but seas of mortal blood
Swim in their eyes; and feverishly, instead
Of sending straight steel through the polished bore
They snap both triggers on a metaphor.

HENRY MORTON ROBINSON.

The Ledge

Harry Vane's parchments date from yesterday:
So tells the ocean, breaking on the ledge
Worn smooth when Homer sang, smooth when the pledge
To summer solstice marked Stonehenge, and gay
With yellow valance ere man learned to pray!
Which is the older, granite sill or sea?
Here plunged the surf before time came to be,
And here a continent resolved to stay.

Cries from the girls inshore, and answering throat
From hardy swimmers farther out afloat,
Children upon the sand, and timid age
With seaward eyes, turning an unread page—
All young again, all equal, all at home
Within the beat of ocean's metronome.

W. P. REEVES.

Tea in Hongkong

In that good ship, my school geography,
I roved the seven seas. No port so far
Or foreign but it was familiar
To that good galleon that carried me.
The isles of Greece seemed near and neighborly;
I was, oh! quite at home in Zanzibar;
I'd take my ease in Cairo's bright bazaar
Or fare to Hongkong for a cup of tea.

My wishes were the winds that drove my prow,
My dreams, the sails. But I, I roam no more,
For now my bark of life is tied to shore
By love, the anchor, and my tethered bow
No longer cleaves strange waters . . . It is long
Since I furled sail to sip tea in Hongkong!

ROSELLE MERCIER.

Under a Reading Lamp

This lonely circle offers me delight,
Comfort and consolation, when the day
Has parted from the world, and I may stay
A while in that old monastery, night,
Sheltered from every echo of the fight
Between the warring factions of this clay
We call mankind, and closely shut away
From sordid sounds and every ugly sight.

With books for friends and dreams for food and drink,
I can forget as much as I forgave,
And from the treasury of silence save
A little strength with which to face the dawn
When it creeps up above the fountain's brink,
And leads a charge across the leaf-strewn lawn.

JOSEPH UPPER.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

Pickwick

THOSE immortal adventurers of England, the Pickwickians, came, if not to life, at least into a loving visibility at the Empire Theatre last week in an elaborate and fond production by Frank C. Reilly. The dramatic version used was by Mr. Reilly and Cosmo Hamilton, and the portrayal of the central figure himself was entrusted to John Cumberland.

Let me say at the outset—for fear of later misunderstanding—that I urge and advise every lover of Pickwick to see this brave, if occasionally mistaken, attempt. If the entire evening refuses, somehow, to become real theatre, and seems often more like an illustrated reading, there are, none the less, individual scenes which emerge triumphantly as real entertainment and joyous reality. It is only the intervening spaces which pall—and even they pall only in a relative sense, for they have far more feeling of devotion and kindly humor and rich understanding than nine-tenths of the recent theatrical fare to which we have been treated.

It is, after all, the task for a rare genius to bring the ambling absurdities of that adventurous band to the particular life of the theatre. A candid and unhypnotized reader must admit that not every page of the Pickwick Papers themselves glows with equal brilliance. Many of them are ponderous, and to ask more of a dramatization is simply to ask for the work of a dramatist with a genius equal to Dickens's own. If this play is, in many spots, far more than a Jarley's wax-works and if, at times, its fantasy rises to a delightful pitch, all except the over-captious should rest content.

Moreover, Mr. Cumberland must bear his share of responsibility. He is simply not Pickwick. He looks the part, thanks to an elaborate and meticulous make-up. But he has failed to catch the soul of Pickwick—and Pickwick without his soul is like stale champagne. It has always seemed to me, since a chance reading of Arthur Machen's superb analysis, that in the love of the unknown, and in a certain lust of the road, Pickwick must take rank with the great adventurers of literature—with Don Quixote and Odysseus. Otherwise he remains nothing more than a benign and funny old gentleman, as uninspired as a club habitué on his annual trip to Florida. It is this tender pathos of the earnest adventurer which Mr. Cumberland has lost. For a few fleeting moments he catches it, only to throw it away with a trick gesture of farce. His Pickwick would be so vastly more amusing if he took himself with profound seriousness. I am sure that Charlie Chaplin could do a gorgeous Pickwick. I am almost sure that Lenox Pawle could do an enlivening one. John Cumberland is little but the outer shell of Pickwick.

At this point, a word is due the direction of Campbell Gullan, who has somehow managed to blend the performances of some fifty actors into an enchanting whole, suffused with atmosphere and bound by a unity of spirit extremely rare even in casts of small proportions. If he had succeeded half as well with Mr. Cumberland as with the rest of his small army, the play, even as it stands, would have vastly more vitality. Mr. Gullan is new among our directors in New York, and his future work will amply repay careful watching.

It would be a pleasant but hopeless task to speak of the innumerable fine separate performances in this play. In the main, none was inadequate—or at least none seemed to be, under Mr. Gullan's direction. But there were three that stood forth, and among them one of the first magnitude—the work of Hugh Miller as Alfred Jingle. Mr. Miller is an English actor, and this is his first appearance in New York. To give reality, even glamour and vagabond grace, to the staccato lines of Jingle is a task which only a highly trained actor of great resource should attempt. Mr. Miller has all of these qualifications and the added one of style. No one in the huge cast approaches him in authority of method, although the earnest clownings of Charles McNaughton as Sam Weller might strike a more popular and familiar note. The third noteworthy performance was that of Bruce Winston as the inflated Sergeant Buzfuz in the famous trial scene of Bardell versus Pickwick. The point is, however, that it would be hard to give a poor performance of either Weller or Buzfuz, whereas it is almost impossible to give even an adequate performance of Jingle. Mr. Miller's work is easily the most distinguished thing in Pickwick. New York is fortunate in having it on view.

Such is Life

IF THE title of this play is true, life has rather less pattern than one suspects, far more cruelty, and almost no redeeming breath of splendor. Written by Peter Glenny and Marie Armstrong Hecht, Such is Life tends somewhat toward the treatment of The Three Sisters. In this case, however, the sisters are four, and so exceedingly do they jangle on each other's nerves or strain to the limit all sense of duty that at moments one suspects their characters have been made subservient to plot. Two of the sisters are married to one worthless man, and things happen in such a way that no one—not even the audience—suspects until the end that a certain hunchbacked and effeminate boy is the son of the first marriage. A recognition scene between mother and son loses in climactic force because of the audience's ignorance, during many preceding scenes, of the true relationship. It is an admirable example of the danger of trying to surprise the audience and the characters on the stage at the same moment. The hidden pathos of half the play is thus lost, except as an afterthought in the glare of the street.

The one thoroughly excellent performance of the piece is that of Hardie Albright as the sensitive troubled and crippled son. Marie Carroll, as his hunchbacked aunt, improves as the play goes on. She might seem more convincing, even at first, if her character had been better prepared by the dramatists' lines; as it is, she bursts too suddenly upon the scene. Ralph Sprague, as the bigamist, is bad in his early scenes, in which he portrays a young man, and worse in his later ones—unbelievably furtive. But then, his part is a wooden one, created to make the plot of the play possible. Ethel Remey is excellent as the feminist sister, and Sydney Shields as the self-sacrificing first wife. The play has moments of real intensity, but creaks with badly oiled machinery throughout most of the twenty years it is supposed to cover.

The Commonweal invites its readers to send in communications on all topics of public interest, regardless of whether or not such topics have been previously discussed in its columns.

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BOOKS

A Group of Western Scholars, by R. J. C. Dublin: Catholic Truth Society of Ireland.

IN SPITE of their modest appearance and low price, the historical pamphlets issued from time to time by the Catholic Truth Society of Ireland have a weight of scholarship and literary excellence that one often seeks vainly in more pretentious documents. The task to which those who are writing them have addressed themselves sufficiently explains the cheap and popular form in which they are issued. This amounts not only to a rewriting of Irish history in so far as everything beyond its bald political and social outlines are concerned, but to the positive re-creation of an historical consciousness in the minds of the Irish people of today. Possibly in no nation at present existent has the process of breaking down the continuity on which countries live and thrive been taken in hand with such evil thoroughness by an alien invader as in Ireland. Robbed of its language, its secular religion reduced to the stark essentials of a fugitive and proscribed faith, its characteristics the happy hunting-ground of popular humorists and sentimentalists such as Lever and Thackeray, the country which evangelized northern Europe and in which art and culture breathed a native air while the continent opposite it was a welter of feudal anarchy, has been presented to the world by its evil genius and traducer as the uncouth beneficiary of such rags and tatters as he could spare from his own later civilization.

It is part of the tragedy of history that such a process can not go on long without profoundly affecting those who are its victims and eventually giving some color and plausibility to the slanders injustice employs to justify its own misdeeds. Sustained by the iron ration of endurance which makes heroes and martyrs, a people will go on fighting for its national existence long after the form and shape that existence once took have perished from memory. The real hour of test arrives when a breathing spell—a victory, however partial and temporary—presents a very harsh and urgent choice between the final acceptance of the alien culture, robbed now of its power to wound and humiliate, and a resolute search for the native culture that centuries of mischance, as they passed, have underplowed into the soil.

It is at such a crisis that historians have a very important part assigned them—to speak their word of good cheer. To a man as much at home in the past as all good historical scholars should be, the lapse of time is not fraught with quite the same sense of desolation that it bears to the lay mind. If his erudition registers many an instance of intellectual ruin, it also registers many a helpful instance of resurrection. Behind all the tumult and the shouting, behind the heartrending record of insurrection after insurrection, apparently crushed in blood and tears and banishment, his researches can bring to light sages and scholars who were masters of their own souls in the most difficult of times, and who dedicated their genius and industry to keeping alight the guttering flame of native Irish culture when all the four winds seemed in a conspiracy to quench it.

A Group of Western Scholars, by a writer who signs only with the initials R. J. C., is the story of a handful of these heroic links with the past during the first fury of penal days. "In the very hour that their destruction was decreed," we are told, "and as the sword was raised to strike them down, the native writers labored with redoubled zeal for the preservation of the national records. . . . And as the torch dropped from the hands that had trimmed and tended it for ages, it was caught up and borne aloft by a devoted band, not indeed

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trained historians like the seanachies, but learned men with whom zeal and honesty and ability made good the lack of professional training." The great bulk of these men were compilers and annalists rather than litterateurs, with the love of learning for its own sake and carelessness as to its immediate rewards that seems to be inherent in Irish scholarship and which we have already noted in dealing with their descendant in our own midst, the devoted Gilmary Shea. "The need of the hour was not a new school of literature: it was a group of writers to refute the slanders which England sought to palm off as authentic history, and to save from destruction the true story of the Irish race."

Duald MacFirbis, born "about 1585," was the most typical of this group. By descent a member of a clan that had once held the fief and castle of Lecan as a reward for its hereditary learning, Duald elected to follow the family tradition through days when confiscation and imprisonment might be looked for as its sole recompense. His early history is a record of seats of learning whose very memory has perished. At the "school of the MacEgans of Mallyacegan in County Tipperary," now a desolate site, the English writer Campion notes that Latin was spoken "like a native tongue." At another vanished seat of learning, "the school of the Mac O'Davorens, specialists in law and the Bearla Feni or Law Dialect," he busied himself for years transcribing the glossary of the Brehon Laws, of which a copy in his handwriting is one of the most prized possessions of Trinity College, Dublin. The "thorough" policy of English Wentworth surprised him at his work. "From the widespread net of confiscation there was no escape for MacFirbis. . . . Bereft of all save his books he went forth from Lecan a wanderer, houseless and homeless." At Galway, which the storm had not yet reached, he found a precarious shelter in the famous college of Saint Nicholas, and set about his most famous work, the Book of Genealogies, described by the historian O'Curry as "perhaps the greatest genealogical compilation in the world."

The respite for a culture literally "on the run" was brief. "Even as he toiled," we are told, "the echoes of the Cromwellian storm were ringing in his ears: nearer and nearer it rolled, and burst over the western city in the spring of 1652. Its coming boded ill for the students of Saint Nicholas. The halls were deserted: students and professors fled, never to return, for the new arrivals seized the college and held it as a church. Many of the fugitives availed themselves of the foreign-bound ships as a means of escape, but the repose of exile had no attraction for MacFirbis. . . . Gathering his manuscripts once more he made his way back to Tirawley."

The period of MacFirbis's life which now follows is obscure, but imagination and what we know of Irish history of the epoch has little difficulty in filling it in. We may be sure that, while there was a roof intact and a fire unquenched, the wandering scholar, now old, never lacked food or shelter. He "seems to have haunted the walls of Lecan and amid surroundings eloquent of the past to have sought inspiration and courage in his labors." Only the record of his tireless transcriptions and editings survives, with now and then such a spectral cry from the encroaching darkness as a note on a page of the greatest of his copies, the Chronicon Scotorum, written by Abbott O'Malone of Clanmacnoise, in the twelfth century: "A front of two leaves of the old book out of which I copy this is wanting, and leave what is before me of this page for them. I am Duald MacFirbis."

In his later days he found a harborage with a humane lawyer of Dublin, Sir James Ware, "one of the few Palesmen who rejected the 'barbarous Ireland' fiction, and labored to spread among his class a knowledge of the facts of Irish history." His death befitted his tragic and fugitive life. Called to Dublin by the son of his patron, now dead, and resting overnight at an inn in Dunglin, County Sligo, he sought to save a young girl from insult at the hands of a drunken soldier. "The soldier seized a knife that was lying on the table and buried it to the hilt in the old man's heart. Thus died the last of the seanachies 'the last polished master who received the special training of the schools in the laws, antiquities, and language of Erin.'"

"The history of Irish literature," says R. J. C., and his elegy is too apt and graceful for any paraphrase to be allowed to mar it, "has no more pathetic figure than this patient toiler, laboring to preserve a knowledge of a vanishing law-code, striving to save for happier times the genealogies of the Gael. Age stayed not his hand, nor dimmed his active mind: bending under the weight of four score years, he wrote his second Book of Genealogies in the intervals of his visits to Dublin. In a normal country under normal conditions his place would be among the honored ones of his people; in his own land himself and his writings are but a name. Due recognition still awaits him; we have yet to take him to our hearts; there still remains unpaid the debt which Ireland owes the last seanachy of Lecan."

HENRY LONGAN STUART.

Meanwhile, by H. G. Wells. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.50.

TO AN unsophisticated reviewer Mr. Wells' latest product is a trifle confusing. It is difficult to suppose that one is intended to take seriously the high philosophy which he injects into it, and yet from his previous record he stands convicted.

The plot of Meanwhile is slender. A newly married English coal-owner—Philip Rylands—and his wife have gathered together a house-party at their villa on the Italian Riviera. Mrs. Rylands detects her husband in some lapse of faith, which may be anything from kissing another woman to adultery, though probably, it is the latter. Through the wisdom of a Mr. Sempack, the intellectual giant of the book, she deals wisely with her husband and brings him to a realization of the duties his position imposes. He returns to England for the general strike of 1926 and starts on the road to a life of social usefulness. A child is born to them, and the novel ends.

The usual reviewer's praise-clichés are all true of Meanwhile; it is well written, interesting, stimulating, and everything else one expects of Mr. Wells; yet it impresses one as being a distinctly inferior book. After all, Mr. Wells's chief trouble has always been that he is too conservative; he says "startling" and "modern" things and then is obviously a little shocked himself at what he has just said.

The strongest part of Meanwhile is that which deals with Mrs. Rylands's treatment of her erring husband. She has discovered him red-handed in the arms of a vulgar young lady, "strident and hard, a conflict of scent and cigarette smoke, with the wit of a music hall and an affectedly flat loud voice." It is incredible to delicate little Mrs. Rylands that her trusted, sensitive Philip should do such a thing. Both her pride and her sensibilities are deeply shocked. She impulsively confides it all to that angular, lovable Mr. Sempack, the Utopist, who resembles "a dissenting minister . . . painted by Augustus John. Very fine, but slightly incredible." Mr. Sempack, genuinely fond of these young people, writes her a long letter

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of advice, pointing out how her high-strung Philip had been sorely tempted through the physical and emotional inactivity of their easy Italianate life; how, if she directs him, sets his energies flowing in other channels—those of social usefulness—Philip will justify her love for and confidence in him. To quote him directly:

"You see, I am not going to ask you to forgive him. That is the danger ahead for both of you. He will ask that, but I know better than he does in this matter, about him and about you. I want you to realize that there is nothing to forgive." We are led to suppose that Mr. Wells considers all this very modern and very new, in fact, that he feels its mere conception to be a real evidence of human progress.

Meanwhile fairly bristles with horrible examples of loose thinking which it requires all one's self-control not to pounce upon and offer up as sacrifices on the altar of the comic muse. All the Utopistic talk is so eloquent and so hollow; yet thousands of Mr. Wells's readers (the People Who Think for Themselves of Henry Arthur Jones fame) will be enthralled by it. "Some day men will grow their happiness in gardens, a great variety of beautiful happiness, happiness under glass, happiness all the year round . . . ." Truly this is soothing syrup for the yearning ladies' clubs and the poor idealistic Messrs. Polly. The publishers, who evidently consider these sentences as the high flight of Mr. Sempack's far-flung wisdom, go on to tell us that all this is "shattered by the quick march of events." Yet Philip Rylands, with Mr. Wells's apparent approval, is saying exactly the same thing in different words at the end of the novel.

One could pick on the false alternative set up between Stoicism and Epicureanism, on the flabby way in which original sin is slurringly consigned to limbo, yet moral dualism preached on every page. But to what end? Those who read the book will either fall for its high-sounding philosophy or they will laugh at it. If a reader cannot see its weakness by himself, no one can show him.

I should say in passing that the rather ill-tempered and inconsequential remarks about Catholicism—especially the reference to the Abbess of Solesmes—signify but one thing, that Mr. Belloc has managed to annoy Mr. Wells very much, and that Mr. Wells is showing it. But I recommend to all who enjoy delicate irony the Jamesian figure of our compatriot, Mr. Plantagenet Buchan. I am only sorry that his true profession is not indicated; he is undoubtedly a member of the American diplomatic service.

Meanwhile is entertaining; everything that Mr. Wells writes is entertaining. But as a serious contribution to thought its value is shockingly less than one would expect from the author even of The World of William Clissold.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE.

Life, Character and Influence of Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, by John Joseph Mangan. New York: The Macmillan Company. Two volumes, $10.00.

PSYCHOANALYSTS should find an interesting study in these two volumes. The various complexes of the vivid personality of Erasmus are full of reactions. His life extended from 1466 to 1536, an exciting period of the world's history. His was one of the keenest minds of his age, but by no means the sanest. "He was by nature intensely impressionable, morbidly sensitive, and physically timid," says the author. Without a vocation to that state of life, he became an Augustinian monk, and was ordained a priest by the bishop of Utrecht. At the

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first opportunity he abandoned the life of a monk and ever afterward detested monks and monasteries. In his Praise of Folly and his Colloquies, he lampooned the monks, which caused the animosity of the religious orders to pursue him. Erasmus lived to regret the publishing of these two books, for the conservative Catholics of that age blamed them for arousing the liberal elements in the Church. They gave aid and comfort to Luther and his followers who eventually worked out in practice the things Erasmus only hinted at. Erasmus was censured on all sides for "laying the egg that Luther hatched."

In spite of his liberalism, Erasmus lived and died in communion with the Holy See. He really never had any sympathy with the Lutheran revolt. In one of his letters he says that he fails to see a single point in which he agrees with Luther. He always acknowledged the Pope as the Vicar of Christ and head of the Church. He never doubted the right of the Popes to temporal power, and said time and again that all should yield obedience to the papal throne. Writing to Clement VII he submits all his works and himself to the judgment of the Roman Church, even if the Church is to pass an august sentence on him.

At the earnest solicitation of the Pope and the hierarchy, he wrote his book on free will against Luther, and he was pleased to learn that it greatly helped to stem the tide of Lutheranism. He sometimes wrote things that were offensive to pious ears, and for that the schoolmen attacked him, and tried to hold him heretical. But it must be remembered that Erasmus was no theologian—the only degree he received was one honoris causa from the University of Turin—and that the Council of Trent, which fixed definitively what was of faith, had not yet been held.

In his later life he wrote "had I known beforehand that such a generation as the present was about to rise, either I would not have written many things that I have, or I would have written otherwise."

Never was Erasmus wilfully heretical, but his unfortunate tongue, his biting wit, his genius for satire, were constantly leading him into difficulties with monks and theologians. Unlike Luther, who left the Church, Erasmus was the champion of reformation within the fold. It was the period of Julius II, Leo X, Adrian VI and Clement VII, an age of effete ecclesiasticism, of more or less superstition, of a corrupt Curia and an intensely ignorant laity. Againt these Erasmus hurled his thunderbolts of wit and satire, hoping for a reformation, which later began under Paul III. Protestants can get little to support their contentions in Erasmus. He says, "I acknowledge the Roman Church; from this Church not even death itself shall tear me. I will not depart the breadth of a finger-nail from those who are in accord with the Catholic Church." This is hardly the language of Protestantism.

Erasmus was the greatest grammarian of the renaissance, and perhaps, too, the most copious and versatile writer of that age. Not only in the knowledge of the pagan classics did he excel, but also in his knowledge of the writings of the early Fathers of the Church, many of whose works he edited and published. Wherever he lived he stimulated learning and strengthened and revivified scholarship by word and example. He was not always correct in his judgments, nor even in his facts, but his genius was graceful and pleasing. Though he knew practically no Hebrew, yet he surpassed all in his knowledge of Greek and Latin. His erudition was comprehensive and he had a wonderful facility, gracefulness and fluency in composition. When we recall that about two million copies of his various works were published, we have some notion of the influence he exerted in every part of Europe. The author appends a catalogue of the various works of Erasmus and the number of editions of each.

Much as the author admires his subject, he is not blind to his defects. He follows the mental processes of this genius and points out that he was carping, narrow and selfish. But much of the irritability, suspiciousness, jealousy, envy and anger he excuses on the plea that Erasmus was a neurasthenic. The author attributes this physical condition to the prenatal anxiety of his unmarried mother, the early loss of both parents, the stigma of his illegitimate and sacrilegious birth, the mental strain from overwork. These causes brought on a psychic influence which upset his nervous poise and lessened his emotional control, begetting in him a chronic nervous exhaustion.

Too much can not be said in praise of Dr. Mangan's work. He has been singularly successful in handling his subject. His running commentaries are not obtrusive. He allows us to see Erasmus through the letters which he wrote and which others wrote to him. He is to be congratulated on doing a piece of work highly creditable to historical scholarship. The book is well annotated and has a splendid index. The printing is all that could be desired. These volumes, of course, are not the last word on Erasmus, as he is one of those historical characters on whom the world never tires of speculating.

JOHN J. DONLAN.

The English Craft Gilds: Studies in Their Progress and Decline, by Stella Kramer. New York: Columbia University Press. $4.50.

IN THE generation which has witnessed an extraordinary awakening of enthusiasm for mediaeval life, the gilds have received their share of attention. It is to be regretted, however, that this interest has recently been bound up with special pleading. Enraptured eulogies have frequently been substituted for painstaking research. One group of enthusiasts regard the gilds as the progenitors of our trade unions; others, especially in England, have sought in them an inspiration for the movement known as Gild Socialism. Of late years, all too few attempts have been made to present unbiased accounts of the various phases of the intricate history of the gilds. But it is only from impartial records that we can learn precisely what features of modern social and economic life have developed from mediaeval gilds, and be able to decide what of their spirit or their form we may with profit resurrect to meet our modern needs.

To the elucidation of the history of the rise and fall of the English craft gilds, Dr. Stella Kramer has made important contributions. Her first study, published a number of years ago, was an inquiry into the alleged rôle of legislation in the decay of the gild system. It was entitled The English Craft Gilds and the Government. The present volume contains the results of three further investigations into the progress and decline of the English craft gilds. The subjects successively dealt with are the Amalgamation of the English Trades and Handicrafts, The Conflict Between the Trades and the Handicrafts and The End of the English Craft Gilds.

Both merchants and artisans participated in a process of consolidation which began in 1345, when three groups of London merchants combined to form the grocers' company. At times, the haberdashers and drapers held aloof from the general mer-

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cantile fraternities, and in places supporting only a small number of gilds, it was sometimes they rather than the mercers who gave their name to the local trading combination. The haberdashers' company of Andover, for instance, contained such diverse elements, as milliners, grocers, innholders, vintners, bakers, brewers, smiths, cappers, hatmakers, barbers, painters and glaziers. In spite of statutory prohibitions the handicraftsmen as well as the merchants consolidated their forces. Dr. Kramer in her exhaustive survey gives one illustration after another of such amalgamation, the chief industrial combinations being the leather, metal, building, clothing and victualing companies. In the building crafts, for example, the once sharply differentiated gilds of plasterers, painters, stainers and bricklayers tended more and more to combine. Mutual protection against ruinous rivalries and the elimination of competition with aliens were impelling motives in bringing about these unions.

As trade and industry grew and the division of labor became more pronounced, conflicts arose among the various trades and handicrafts. Moreover, the gilds no longer had power to enforce their system—especially that of apprenticeship—supervision over the nature of the product disappeared with the loss of the power of search, and other rules of the crafts were violated on all sides. Amalgamation failed to save the situation. With the triumph of free trade and the fall of protection, the last of the organized trades and crafts which had grown up in the later middle ages passed into history.

Dr. Kramer's book is well-documented and contains a bibliography compiled during years of careful research. The student of social history will welcome this work as a valuable contribution to the history of craft gilds. As it seems not to have been written with a purpose, the propagandist will find in it little to controvert and little to praise. Although trade unionists, gild socialists and even I. W. W.'s may derive comfort from certain of its findings, it is apparently a book that was conceived without a thesis. We are in need of such dispassionate works on this mooted question. Sober history, like all truth, will help to make us free. It may or may not succeed in making us gildsmen.

GEORGIANA PUTNAM MCENTEE.

Masterpieces of Chikamatsu, translated by Asataro Miyamori. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $8.00.

KYOTO is the most likely of the nine places that compete for the honor of being the birthplace of Chikamatsu Monzaemon, the Japanese Shakespeare, who, by tradition, received his education from the learned Buddhist priests of the Omi province. Early in life he took up his residence in Kyoto, where he produced kabuki, that is, plays similar to those of the European theatre, domestic, historical and legendary, accompanied by song and music. Later he retired to Osaka and produced joruri or puppet plays, also divided into classes of domestic and historical character. His career of joruri writer lasted over forty-five years, until his death in the year 1724. His work in this time consisted of 104 plays, eighty historical and twenty-four domestic, with suicide as a frequent dénouement.

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Courtezan's Frankincense, The Tethered Steed and Fair Ladies at a Game of Poem-Cards, indicating the superiority of Chikamatsu's domestic scenes over those of his historical dramas. "The appeal to the eye and the appeal to the ear are his constant preoccupation." Every line of his poetic narratives acquires an unusual power for the initiate by its subtlety. He was called "a god of writing" and "a dragon (demi-god) among men," and no correct estimate of his works can be made without an appreciation of their highly important musical elements.

Mr. Miyamori's book gives the English translation of Chikamatsu's Almanac of Love, Fair Ladies at a Game of Poem-Cards, The Courier for Hades, The Love Suicide at Amijima, The Adventures of the Hakata Damsel and The Tethered Steed. His book is a valuable contribution to our knowledge of Japanese thought and art, in addition to being entertaining and interestingly written. It can be recommended to special student and general reader alike.

GARRET LEWALYS.

Am Eichentisch, by Peter Durfler; Die Heilige Freundschaft, by Abbot Aelred, translated by Karl Otten; Aufstieg zum Berge Karmel, by Saint John of the Cross, translated by P. Ambrosius. Munich: Josef Kösel und Friedrich Pustel.

THREE volumes of recent German Catholic literature indicate the growth of a strong cultural movement. Am Eichentisch, a collection of short stories by the able priest-novelist Peter Durfler, makes one feel more keenly the want of similar work in this country. The narratives are full-blooded, distinguished for skilful characterization and attractive in style; but they are written for the general public and have the aroma of folk-lore. Those who read German will be charmed and ennobled by every page. Indeed one wishes that little books like these, beautifully printed and bound, could somehow find their way into class-rooms where German is taught and read. One relishes particularly the rural atmosphere which the stories convey—an atmosphere aromatic with simplicity, natural living and quiet experience of human essentials.

Few know that Saint Aelred, English abbot of Rievaulx during the second quarter of the twelfth century, was a charming writer of Latin. He combined genuine piety with humanistic learning, and was noted for a singular lovableness of character. Karl Otten has resurrected the manuscript of De Spirituali Amicitia and translated it into fluent, charming German. Though the text was inspired by Cicero's finest dialogue, it has a Christian flavor and a warm human interest which one does not find in the great Roman's text. German discrimination in spotting this little treasure and setting it forth in excellent format deserves great commendation. Would that some American publishing firm could see its way clear to do likewise!

The first volume of a new German translation of the works of Saint John of the Cross comes as a welcome reminder of the influence of the lofty Spanish mystic. P. Ambrosius has succeeded in giving a remarkably clear and interesting version of the original. Great care has been expended upon the text, and both print and book-making are admirable. One feels that readers of The Ascent of Mount Carmel and its companion volumes may profitably use the German version, if it is possible for them to do so. It is nearer to us than the original Spanish and is noticeably superior to the English translation, good though the latter is.

PAUL CROWLEY.

History of European Diplomacy, 1914-1925, by R. B. Mowat. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $6.25.

WHAT I want, and I suppose what most of us want, in a history of diplomacy is not just a recital of the diplomatic acts of governments on any given occasion, but rather an analysis of what made the men in charge of government think that was the right or desirable thing to do, and why they did or did not carry public opinion with them. In other words, I think that, since what most people in the world really desire is peace and personal prosperity (and desire so badly that they will fight to get it) and since diplomacy is supposedly the means used by government for that end, a history of diplomacy should try to give to the average thinking person some understanding of the constants of diplomacy: those things in each nation which one must understand and take into consideration in order to secure the peace and prosperity of individual citizens.

Diplomats are generally considered to be cold, scheming, rather wayworn and cynical gentlemen with a clear though sometimes Machiavellian idea of the purposes they wish to effect. That is not the experience of anyone who has made diplomacy his profession. Very few are Machiavellis. In great emergencies diplomats are only average people doing the best they can and seeing only a little further ahead than the majority—if they see ahead at all. It is a very rare diplomat who can see very far into both sides of a problem leading to disagreement or war and can carry people on both sides to a clear and constructive and satisfactory solution. Mostly it is patchwork built on precedent, and precedent is of accidental origin at least as often as it is intentional. A statement of facts over a troubled period, no matter how carefully sifted or how agreeably written, is not, strictly speaking, a history of diplomacy. It is only a preliminary step to such history, and I am afraid that this one of the most recent of the books on the subject is only that.

Take, for instance, Chapter XIX, The Failure of President Wilson, as one subject with which Americans might be expected to be familiar. The author does not show why Wilson, or Lodge, or Borah, or the American people, acted as they did. He does not show the "why" of anything. If Americans get nothing out of it, no one else will. The American public is not perfectly informed concerning international affairs, but it is a shrewd public and, being composed of many parts, it is probably less solidly prejudiced than any other public. It is likely that through our press we are generally more nearly accurately informed than the readers of European continental papers (though that statement does not hold strictly true at the present moment). It is certain that, little as we know about European motives and characteristics, Europeans in general know far less about ours.

European diplomacy during Mr. Mowat's period deals largely with efforts to rebuild upon the ruins of the war, to restore individual prosperity (which is national prosperity) and to secure peace. The sequence of events during that period, accurately and attractively stated, is very valuable, but the "why" of it all, the constants we have to deal with, is the final object of the writing.

No one here has bettered Carlton Hayes's brief sketch of those events, nor Parker Moon's Imperialism nor Latané's Foreign Policy. The three taken together give us a basis on which to build. Mr. Mowat, for all his interest and ability, has given us just another readable book.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

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THE QUIET CORNER

"I counsel thee, shut not they heart nor thy library."—C. LAMB.

The return of Doctor Angelicus to the Corner was made the occasion for a real outburst of the feelings restrained during the several weeks of his vacation; and when he had caught his breath and Tittivillus had put away his umbrella and the Gladstone bag, it was evident that the old gentleman felt that his pent-up eloquence had again found its audience. Angelica's box of chocolates received an avid appreciation from the group, as the Doctor acknowledged the neatness of his desk with a gentle, tolerant smile, which fell like balm upon the soul of his faithful Amanuensa.

"Do tell us all about your motor trip home," she murmured, "I am sure you had some interesting experiences in the rector's car."

"Our ride was a great success, except for an unfortunate left tire which caused my old friend Rector Peregrinus considerable trouble. But then, you know, I am not a disciple of the speed that characterizes the day, and I did not mind the several hours of delay, as it gave me an opportunity for converse with the loungers about the repair stations. Ever since we started to run so fast we have lost all character in our journeys. Read the stories of our recent motor-novelists and compare them with the journeys of Goldsmith and Tristram Shandy. The pedestrians certainly had time to collect their thoughts. In the days of the one-horse shay, and even in bicycle times, we had leisure enough to bow to the passing farmer; now he is recognized merely as a supplement to the travel-map, or when the traffic signs have fallen into a delirium, or when he appears with the constable to claim his dues for the calf cut off in its flower, or the beheaded chicken. How different from the good old days when a load of hay or the lowing herd might block the highway, when the farmer's wife confined her interests to butter-making instead of passing her afternoons selling popcorn and puppies of suspicious breed to the motorists from the city!

"I remember from my own youthful days the heavy brougham in which old Lady Luella used to drive me out, and how the dear, stout old lady used to grieve when, feeling the torpid pace of her hackneys a trial to my energies, I insisted on jumping out to walk. Memories come back to me of one of our evening drives when, wending through the older part of Rome, under a full moon, I rhapsodized in my favorite manner on the immense antiquity of the primitive alley through which, to the extreme terror of her ladyship, I had directed her coachman. Just as I was speaking of the thousands of years that had elapsed since the alley was first a human thoroughfare, a sepulchral voice came from one of the dark entrances and, in this far-off land, I heard the fatal number cried at me, 'Twenty-three!'

"An equal surprise attended me on my way through Connecticut when there hobbled into the service station a strangely distorted old man; his face was unshaven rather than bearded, a crooked old stick and an age-green coat gave him the look of the last of the bards. Seeing me he shouted:

" 'Welcome, venerable father—my friends, most welcome! Friends and fellow-soldiers, at length the hour has arrived which to Piezarro's hopes presents the full reward of our undaunted enterprise——'

" 'Don't mind him, he's the nuts and bugs of this town,' murmured the young mechanic who was working at the tire. It transpired that, in his early manhood in Bangor, Maine, the old gentleman before us had appeared in Brinsley Sheridan's

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adaptation of Kotzebue's drama Piezarro, and still delivered himself on every occasion of snatches from the play which, as was appropriate in Maine, was called as if the hero were a devotee to the local breakfast pastry of the region.

" 'Hear me, old man,' the retired actor continued. 'Even now we march against the Peruvian army. We know there is a secret path that leads to your stronghold among the rocks.' Then changing his tone into a feminine note he rambled on:

" 'The ecstasy of his birth I pass—that in part is selfish; but when first the white blossoms of his teeth appear, breaking the crimson buds that did encase them, that is a day of joy; next when from his father's arms he runs without support and clings, laughing and delighted, to his mother's knee, that is the mother's heart's next holiday; and sweeter still the third, when e'er his little stammering tongue shall utter the grateful sound of father, mother—oh! that is the dearest joy of all.'

"By this time the tire was again mended and as we started off the old Piezarro waved his stick at me and shouted:

" 'No, Alonzo, date not the life which thou hast run, by mean reckoning of the hours and days which thou hast breathed —though sinking in decrepid age, he prematurely falls, whose memory records no benefit conferred by him on man. They only have lived long who have lived virtuously!'

"As they cranked up the Ford, the rector merely remarked: 'I remember James Wallack and Ellen Tree were very effective in Pizarro. They tell me also that Kemble and Mrs. Siddons won many laurels in the cast.' "

—THE LIBRARIAN.

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